MARVEL Comics
WORLD'S BEST-SELLING FAN MAGAZINE!
MARVEL AGE
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AUTHORITY
CAPTAIN AMERICA
CELEBRATES 400 ISSUES!
EXCLUSIVE COMMENTS FROM CAP'S CREATORS!

STAN LEE PRESENTS

MARVEL AGE®

Witterstaetter's Witticisms

There is a little graveyard set back in the woods in Arkansas, with only an overgrown dirt road marking its hideaway. Rumor has it that the dead were settlers on a wagon train who were wiped out by smallpox. Now, crudely fashioned tombstones, all askew, worn by wind and time, are all that mark that these peo – ple some old, some young, some good, some maybe not so good — ever existed.

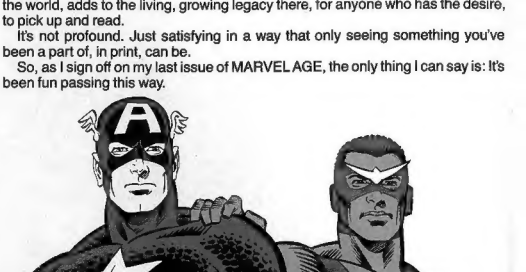
Old burial grounds are always interesting — whether it's the ominous, vastly historical one in Salem, Massachusetts, or another little family plot I know that sits in between two highway lanes outside of Dallas. I've often wished that there could be a weather-proofed book attached to each crumbling stone that lists those who loved this person, those who hated him, what they did, who they influenced. In other words, a history of a human life. Instead, we just have names and dates, and *maybe*, if we even think about it, the knowledge that someone passed this way.

That's one reason the bound volume room at Marvel is so important. The history of an entire company sits on those shelves — but not just of a company — of fascinating characters and the people who made them real, as well. Just pick up any old book, and you are holding a history of loves, triumphs, failures, passions — both real and imaginary.

So, in a way, every new book, marked with the names of those who put it out into the world, adds to the living, growing legacy there, for anyone who has the desire, to pick up and read.

It's not profound. Just satisfying in a way that only seeing something you've been a part of, in print, can be.

So, as I sign off on my last issue of MARVEL AGE, the only thing I can say is: It's been fun passing this way.



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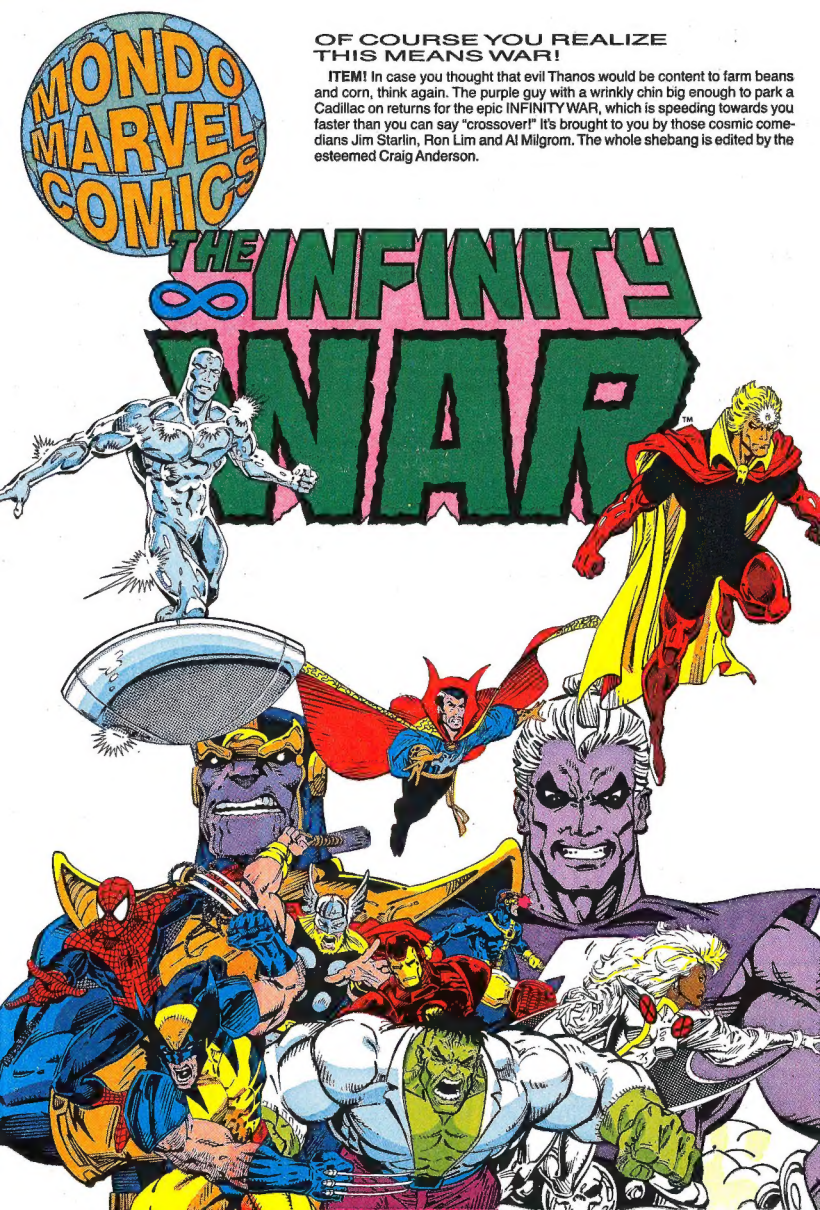


OF COURSE YOU REALIZE THIS MEANS WAR!

ITEM! In case you thought that evil Thanos would be content to farm beans and corn, think again. The purple guy with a wrinkly chin big enough to park a Cadillac on returns for the epic INFINITY WAR, which is speeding towards you faster than you can say "crossover!" It's brought to you by those cosmic comedians Jim Starlin, Ron Lim and Al Milgrom. The whole shebang is edited by the esteemed Craig Anderson.

MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ EXTRA

Sure, sure, the guys at Marvel Comics always grab all the glory. Here's a Trivia Quiz Extra to test your knowledge of some of Marvel's famous female contributors. Answers, as usual, appear on page 32.

1. This artist extraordinaire not only has held many staff art positions at Marvel, but also drew INCREDIBLE HULK.
   A) Marie Severin
   B) Amanda Connor
   C) Barbara Slate
   D) Ralph Macchio

2. After editing the successful mutant titles, this woman went on to become a successful author for more mutant books!
   A) Louise Simonson
   B) Jackie Tavarez
   C) Hildy Mesnick
   D) Ralph Macchio

3. After working her way up Marvel's editorial ladder, this woman penned several years worth of exciting DAREDEVIL adventures.
   A) Mary Mac
   B) Marie Javins
   C) Ann Nocenti
   D) Ralph Macchio

4. Marvel's Traffic Manager not only makes sure all of our books get to the printer on time, but she was also featured on the covers of MARVEL AGE #108 and #111! She is —
   A) Dawn Geiger
   B) Cindy Emmert
   C) Virginia Romita
   D) Ralph Macchio

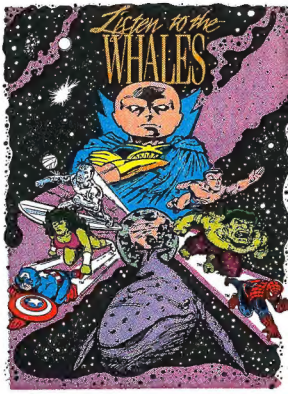
ANSWERS TO MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ EXTRA

1. A 2. A 3. C 4. C

MOVE OVER, LASER ZEPPELIN!

ITEM! Here in the Big Apple, we try and value what little of the environment we have left. That's one of the reasons why the Yonkers Planetarium is running a new show, called *"Listen To The Whales — Can Super Heroes Save The Earth?"* It's a really groovy program, a bloody multi-media extravaganza, mate! It features beautiful music, multi-colored laser art performances, breathtaking footage of the great whales (and even the lousy whales!), plus — you guessed it — Marvel Super Heroes!

And the great part is that this show is touring planetariums around the country throughout 1992! Once the show leaves New York, it will be spreading the good word all across the U.S.A.! If possible, MARVEL AGE will try and run a 1992 schedule of this event, so you can visit it when it comes to your neighborhood.



COW OF THE MONTH!

ITEM! Following hot on the hooves of last month's Jim Lee Bovine Masterpiece, we present to you Marveloids Marie Javins' *TexCow*, provided by the esteemed GHOST RIDER artist, Tex. This DuoShade beauty is one of many masterworks on Marie's *Wall of Cows*, the full story of which can be read in MARVEL AGE's *EpicGrams* #99. What hot artist's cow will appear next month? Tune in to *Mondo Marvel* and find out!

GOING ONCE. . . GOING TWICE. . . GONE!

ITEM! December 18th, 1991 will go down in comic book history. . .but not for the reason that you'd think.

The chic and elite Sotheby's auction house in New York usually pawns off works by Picasso, Van Gogh, and Monet. However, on this particular day, the items on the block were by such notable artists as Jim Lee, Bill Everett, and Steve Ditko!

The actual bidders came from many different walks of life. . .some were procuring comic book classics for museums, others were wily investors, and some were fans with a couple of hundred grand just burning a hole in their pocket!

Sub-Mariner's debut in the November, 1939 MARVEL COMICS #1 went for a cool $28,600! Now we all know how Namor got that fortune recently! The issue also featured the Human Torch and Ka-Zar!

Steve Ditko's original art for AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #31 scarfed up a nice $24,200! Also on the block was Jack Kirby's original art for FANTASTIC FOUR #12 and #15, which netted a respectable $7,150!

The big winner was the lucky guy who plunked down $44,000 for the original art to Jim Lee's mega-selling X-MEN #1! The now almost broke buyer plans on re-selling the pages individually at his California store.

All told, when you add up the auctioned works by Bob Kane, E.G. Segar, and Frank Frazetta to the pile, the pot came to a whopping $1.2 *million* dollars! And just think — the next time your parents say that *you* spend too much money on comics, you can say —!

The AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!
"IF THIS BE MY DESTINY...!"
A NEW ERA IN THE LIFE OF SPIDER-MAN IS ABOUT TO BEGIN, AND YOU SHALL LIVE IT WITH HIM!
Masterful Script by: STAN LEE
Magnificent Artwork by: STEVE DITKO
Meticulous Lettering by: SAM ROSEN

M'S REMS and NEW TALENT UPDATE!

ITEM! Well, if you've been following our bi-monthly *M's Rems and New Talent Department*, you'd know that we're producing a 5-page comic book to be published right here in MARVEL AGE by completely novice talent! That's right! Novice writer Jean-Jacques Dzialowski and novice pencil artist Gerald "Teon" Walker are working with not-novice editor Mark Gruenwald on this special, once in a lifetime project! Well, these valiant ones are now joined by Carmen Imperato, of Levittown, PA, who will be novice-ly adding the india ink to Gerald's finished pencils! Congratulations, Carmine!!

At the moment, Jean-Jacques is scribbling away in his Paris flat, working on the script to *Smashing Party*, a 5 pager featuring Spider-Man and Flag Smasher. Teon is busy tweaking a few minor corrections on the pencil art. Carmen will start his bit soon enough, which means that there's an open call to all of you aspiring colorists and letter artists out there! You've got a pretty good chance here, folks! To date, we've gotten a ton of inking submissions but piddly-few lettering or coloring samples. This could be your big chance, kids. This opportunity may never present itself again! *Is this dramatic or what?!?* Now, we weren't born yesterday, and we know that you all want to be the next hot fan-boy dream-pick. And what better way for that to happen, than to be a part of the MARVEL AGE *Smashing Party*?!

Hey! Send in your lettering and coloring samples to:

New Talent Department
c/o MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE
Marvel Comics Group
387 Park Ave. South
New York, NY 10016

ROB IS A PLANETEER

ITEM! Besides being the *World's Best Selling Fan Magazine,* MARVEL AGE also likes to give credit where credit is due. CAPTAIN PLANET editor Rob Tokar has started a way cool recycling program here at the House of Ideas that we thought y'all would want to hear about.

We go through tons of paper around here. Photo copies, memos, scripts and plots all stack up in the corners, and until recently, were just tossed away. Well, the Rob-ster started collecting said paper trash in his office, and sent it out to a local guy who cut and bound it all into lovely note pads!

These pads were then passed around to everybody who needed them, thusly saving a bunch of trees! But the really cool part is that when you look on the back of any note pad page, you never know what you'll find — pencil art, script pages, or Top Secret Marvel Memorandi. A random sampling turned up line art from the Silver Surfer Graphic Novel HOMECOMING, an OFFICIAL HANDBOOK of the MARVEL UNIVERSE entry for Paladin, a memo with the announcement of the 1991 Marvel Picnic, and photocopies of classic Lee-Kirby THOR issues from the recent MARVEL MASTERWORKS. Just another example of how you never know what will turn up around here!

I'M FALLING! AIIIEEE--
I VOWED NOT TO TRY TO CAPTURE YOU... BUT I MAY ATTEMPT TO SAVE YOU!
AND THUS DOES A CAREER IN VIOLENCE COME TO ITS END...
HOLD HIM! DON'T LET HIM FALL!! DON'T LET HIM FALL!! I--I STILL LOVE HIM! SOB! I CAN'T HELP MYSELF!
DON'T WORRY, LADY-- THOR'S GOT HIM! BUT A CRUMB LIKE THAT SURE DON'T DESERVE ANYONE AS LOYAL AS YOU!
THOR SAVED HIS LIFE--BUT HERE'S MY BARK!

MARVEL® TOP TEN LIST

During a lunch at Manhattan's chic and elite *Casa Mia,* HULK scribe Peter David informed me that he was sick and tired of the abuse we were heaping upon Rick Jones in each and every MARVEL AGE calendar. He mentioned passionately that he's been trying to make Rick a fully realized character, and then the Official Marvel Zombie Magazine comes along and trashes him.

Well, for more on this controversy, check out *last month's* calendar, but for now, here's a list of the *Top Ten List of Stupid Things Rick Jones Has Done.*

10. Bet His Friends he Would Play Harmonica on Gamma Bomb Test Site.
9. Making All Those Goofy "Snapper Carr" references.
8. That Whole Negative Zone Thing.
7. Saying *"Faaaaaaaaantastic."*
6. Getting the Universe Mad At Him Over *"Sidekick."*
5. Not Putting WCW Comics #1 in a Plastic Bag.
4. Wearing That Bucky Costume.
3. Meeting Elvis In The After-Life And Not Getting His Autograph.
2. That Whole Teen Brigade Thing.
1. Not Staying in That Cave With The Talking Animal-People.

—Mike Lackey

THE MEDIA WATCH GROWS LIKE MOLD!!

ITEM! Here's another batch! First up is Tomas Carrillo, who spotted an item on the Marvel Stock report in the *Lodi News-Sentinel.* Good work, Tom! How many shares did you pick up? Daniel Cornwell, of Columbia, South Carolina, sent in a piece about the Marvel Trading Cards from *The State.* Interestingly enough, the paper would be locally available to the folks at Impel, who publish our cards! Eerie, isn't it?

We were also sent a clipping from the *Teen Beat* section of some local newspaper, by an anonymous Marveloid. The piece focused on the new crop of black super heroes, including Cage and Deathlok. So here's an open query to whoever sent in that piece. . .Hey, man! Who the heck are you?!?

Anne O'Brien, of New Grocery, PA, sent us a lyric sheet from rapper Ice-T's *Original Gangster* album, where he says, *"I ain't no super hero, This ain't no Marvel Comic!"* I have that album in my collection and I can't believe that I forgot to mention it myself! Also, Kenny "Buzz" Funk, of Hollywood, CA spotted some Marvel paraphernalia in the ABC-TV show, *The Commish.* Too bad that one got the network axe, because we'd have loved to see it during the rerun! Kevin R. Ressler (*a big wrestling fan, no doubt!*) sent us a clipping from the January 13th edition of *People Magazine,* about the new Marvel coffee table book by Les Daniels. The clipping sports a nifty drawing of the Human Torch by the illustrious John Romita. Gee, we're turning up *everywhere* lately!

So here's a great big, whomping No-Prize to each and every one of you yahoos! Keep your eyes peeled, dear readers, for Marvel blurbs in *your* local papers. Who knows? You just might end up in our next installment of *Media Watch!*

MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

Captain America starred on the cover of the first Marvel comic I ever read (TALES OF SUSPENSE #90), standing amazed as the Red Skull imprisoned New York City in a floating glass bubble! For over fifty years now, Cap's adventures have amazed and astounded Marvel fans the world over. On the occasion of the 400th issue of CAPTAIN AMERICA, here are twelve trivia teasers covering facets of Steve Rogers' varied career. Star-spangled answers on page 31!

— Brian Nelson

1) Steve Rogers' parents are named Joseph and Sarah — but when he first started to recall his lost memories of his childhood, he remembered their names as:
A) Walter and Elizabeth
B) Grant and Christine
C) Clark and Carole
D) Stan and Jack

2) Steve received his WWII training at:
A) Camp Lehigh
B) Camp Lejeune
C) Camp Pendleton
D) Camp Runamok

3) Which man battled Cap as a member of Batroc's Brigade?
A) the Living Laser
B) Ghost-Maker
C) the Melter
D) General DeGaulle

4) Cap and the Falcon were responsible for defeating which crimelord?
A) Diamondback
B) Stone-Face
C) Bushmaster
D) Bugsy Siegel

5) Who was the disabled pacifist who caused Cap to rethink some of his notions about courage and nonviolence?
A) Gail Runciter
B) Arnie Roth
C) Dave Cox
D) Ghandi

6) In the Jack Kirby saga leading up to Cap's 200th issue, Cap and the Falcon encountered "The Man Who Sold the United States," known to his friends as:
A) Myron MacLain
B) Jack Ryder
C) Mason Harding
D) Ted Turner

7) Which colleague of Steve Rogers was subsequently revealed to be a criminal mastermind?
A) Sgt. Duffy
B) Sgt. Muldoon
C) Clay Quartermain
D) Anna Kapplebaum

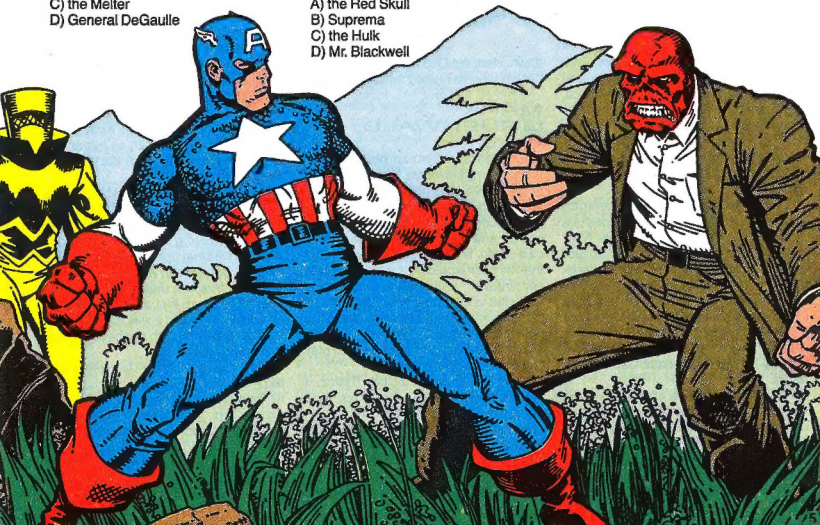
8) Rick Jones donned the costume of Bucky to fight with Cap against:
A) the Red Skull
B) Suprema
C) the Hulk
D) Mr. Blackwell

9) In which Marvel series did Steve Rogers *first* decide to resign his identity as Captain America?
A) AVENGERS
B) TALES OF SUSPENSE
C) CAPTAIN AMERICA
D) QUITTERS ILLUSTRATED

10) Despite the efforts of Diamondback and Bernie Rosenthal, the most significant woman in Cap's life remains Sharon Carter, also known as:
A) Agent 13
B) Agent 86
C) Agent 99
D) Sharrie the Human Pincushion

11) Which of these men played Cap on television?
A) William Devane
B) Red Brown
C) Lou Ferrigno
D) Dick York

12) In the 1940s movie serial, Cap's secret identity was not Steve Rogers, but rather crusading district attorney:
A) Blake Tower
B) Grant Mason
C) Grant Gardner
D) Guy Gardner



CAPTAIN AMERICA TURNS 400!

Captain America is the Sentinel of Liberty. In his 50 year history, he's fought against the most evil, vile and corrupt threats to freedom and America. Throughout it all, even when he was down and out, or frozen in an iceberg for that matter, Cap has always put his ideals first. And many argue that that is why he is, arguably, the greatest super hero.

Like Daredevil, Captain America doesn't have super strength, he can't fly, and he doesn't have X-ray vision. After purging his system of the Super Soldier serum, Cap's strength is only at "peak human" (for all you Marvel Universe aficionados). Cap's strength comes from his courage...his determination, not from Cosmic Rays or a Gamma Bomb blast. Any of us *could* be Captain America. Maybe there's a little bit of Cap in each of us.

To celebrate Cap's 400th issue, we spoke to many of his talented creators, much the way we did for Daredevil's 300th issue celebration. Cap's anniversary comes in the midst of *Operation: Galactic Storm*, so we can see that this old-timer has no intentions of slowing down. Here are Cap Comments from the people who've helped make him great.

MARK GRUENWALD
writer

A friend and I would play Captain America and Hawkeye. We were around ten or eleven, old enough to know better. I'd be Cap and he'd be Hawkeye. He'd put tinker toy pieces on the end of his arrows and I had a garbage can cover as a shield. The excercise we would do is that my back would be towards him, he'd say "freeze!," and I had to turn and deflect the stun-arrow with my shield. Once he aimed real low, and blasted me right in the kneecap. It was a great stun-arrow. We never *did* get anyone to play Quicksilver or Scarlet Witch.

My fave foes would include Batroc...I always thought he was a lot of fun. He'd get it over on Cap and he didn't even have a shield. I thought that was pretty gutsy. He had such a swashbuckling personality in his French Legionnaire kind of way. Madame Hydra in the Steranko appearance I thought was just evil personified. MODOK, as he originally appeared, was just so *strange!* Here's this big head sitting in a chair! They kind of normalized him later on, but the first Kirby appearance was just the most bizarre thing I'd ever seen. Then Kirby made Arnim Zola — a guy with *no* head! Red Skull, of course, but I didn't like the World War II stuff as much.

By popular demand--D-Man returns in issue 400. There's not a month that goes by in which 25-50% of our mail tacks on — *Bring Back D-Man!* I didn't think he was that popular. He didn't have much support when he was around the first time. His first demise was a direct parallel to Cap's first dip in suspended animation. I thought it was an interesting reverse in having Cap *not* have a plane explode on his partner.

Let's discuss Cap's relationship with the Avengers. He's incredibly charismatic, with more experience than anybody except Thor. They know he's a straight shooter, a person who'll give you a fair deal, who would never ask of anybody that which he wouldn't do himself. In fact, he expects considerably less from others than he does from himself. He's

the most benevolent big brother or father image you can have.

The 18-part John Walker as Cap was my favorite storyline I've written thus far. I was able to play with the legend, and the readers have responded. Sales went up during that story, and have remained strong ever since. I'm glad I didn't milk it longer than we did, since it wrapped up in issue 350. I still think of it as my high point.

RIK LEVINS
pencil artist

I started about a year ago, I think on issue #387. I took over for Ron Lim, because he was working on some other projects at the time. I was doing some work for Renée Witterstaetter, and Ralph Macchio saw it, and asked me if I wanted to do CAP. I said, "yes yes yes yes yes!" Well, maybe I answered with slightly greater enthusiasm.

The funny thing is, I didn't like Cap when he was first revived around 1963. Hulk was my favorite, and I was upset when his book was canceled in '62. I was happy a year later when Hulk appeared in AVENGERS, but I didn't like it when he got displaced by Cap. But y'know, he won me over. Here's this guy, presumably one of the least of the super powered guys, holding his own with Iron Man and Thor. It was very impressive.

My favorite art team was Mike Zeck and John Beatty. That's when I really began to enjoy the book, when they came on it. So, when I'm drawing Cap, I try to put some of Mike's energy into the pencils, and draw the costume like chain mail, as Beatty did. Then it goes to Danny Bulanadi, who does whatever it is he does with it. I'm always surprised how great the work looks after Danny gets hold of it.

Every character has his own unique style. Sure, Cap, Daredevil and Spider-Man all do acrobatics, but I'd say they do them differently. Spidey has a tendency to go all crazy...Daredevil is more refined. Cap is between the two, I think. He's there doing flips and cartwheels and such, but he's so darned *dignified* when he's doing it.

I'd have to say Crossbones is my favorite Cap villain, because he's such a match for Cap physically. Red Skull, as well, since he's the perfect match for Cap mentally. And the Viper's a lot of fun to draw, too!

There's a lot of talk about Cap's being symbolic of the American Dream. Well, everyone has his own ideas about the symbolism of America. I'd say Cap has been able to stay even with the times. Freedom of choice is very important to him. He's an old fashioned hero, the complete opposite of the modern breed of bloodthirsty Wolverines and Punishers. There's also an increase in patriotism in this country now, and I'd say we can all use a little more of what Cap has.

RON LIM
pencil artist

I always tried to draw him as very noble — the ultimate hero. Many of today's super heroes are quite vicious and bloodthirsty. Cap's an old throwback to simpler times. The guy is a living legend!

When I was on the CAPTAIN AMERICA book, Mark Gruenwald and I tried tried to set that "legendary" tone. Even though Cap isn't "super powered," I still consider him head and shoulders over many other guys who can lift buildings! Cap just has it over the other heroes.

And that chin! Other artists had drawn it rather large in the past, but I tried to make it really broad. His chin is just huge! Mark and I also talked his costume over, too. Slightly re-vamping it by making the star on his chest larger than it had been. And just for the record — the red stripe should go directly underneath the star! I hate it when colorists make that middle stripe white!

But Cap's bravery and valor is really the thing that makes him so appealing to me. During INFINITY GAUNTLET, if you recall, Cap stands up to Thanos after everybody else has been killed. Here's a guy with no super powers going up against a god, and he actually survived!

During GAUNTLET, and even on CAP, I would always make him standing more powerfully than other heroes he'd be starring with. Sort of put the other heroes off to the side, you know? For example, I'd always make Cap larger in the shot than say, Spider-Man. I'd love to return to the character, maybe do a special project with Mark. After INFINITY WARS — who knows?

Sure, a lot of his ideals seem corny. But he is more representative of America and what America stands for than any other hero I can think of. His costume, so recognizable, is an important factor in that. Even more so when you consider that during my run on the book, most of the stories were *Cap* stories and not *Steve Rogers* stories. And hey — it was a lot of fun working on a 50 year old hero. It makes me feel like a part of history.

I still get asked to draw Cap when I'm at conventions. Obviously they like the way Cap is so down to Earth. . .Kind of like the sort of hero they would like to be. I was just thinking how I've drawn

both Cap and the Silver Surfer. Gosh — I've drawn Marvel's 2 most noble heroes!!

MIKE ZECK
pencil artist

I knew who Captain America was when he popped out of the ice in AVENGERS #4, but he didn't interest me all that much. I always liked him, it was just that I wasn't keeping up with his adventures until I had broken into comics.

I don't know if I was using a specific theory or practice when I was drawing him, I mean, I made him a big man with a huge jaw. I always had him standing erect, never slouching. Cap is always in charge. He's comfortable with his inner/outer strength.

My favorite story during my run on the book would be the Deathlok piece. Mostly because it featured the return of the Howlers. I'd like to return to Cap one day. . .I hope to.

DANNY BULANADI
inker

I've been on the book 2 or 3 years now, ever since Ron Lim took it over. I really like Ron. He's very friendly. He puts that energy into his pencils. They're very dynamic.

I like to render his armor as chain mail. With the reality trend in comics now, I realize that I have to render more realistically. It's the new modern style, and I have adapted my style to fit CAP.

The Red Skull is my favorite villain. He's just so mean and nasty, he's always killing somebody. My favorite scene with the Red Skull is when he fought the Kingpin in the arena. It was like a kick-boxing/wrestling scene. I really like drawing the Red Skull because I can put in many rough edges and lines on his face. In a way, he's more fun than Cap.

Why is Cap so popular? I think it's because he embodies the American Way. He can do good things, like saving innocents in trouble, or he can save the whole planet earth. But even when he's in space, Cap is always down to earth. He has time to listen to people.

So, when I'm inking Cap, I try to put a thicker line around him than anybody else in the panel. Because the title of the book is CAPTAIN AMERICA, I think he should pop out from any other character in the book. He should look different than the others — more heroic. Even if he is with other heroes.

JOHN BYRNE
pencil artist

I first saw Cap in the AVENGERS, and it was a slightly *deja vu* experience. I couldn't remember where I'd seen him before. I later remembered I'd seen a subsequent rip-off version in a Harvey comic, called *The Double Life of Private Strong*. It's almost completely forgotten now, deservedly so. He even had the shield underneath his uniform!

The situation was similiar to how I discovered the Sub-Mariner. I thought at the time that Namor was a very neat rip-off of Aquaman. Of course, now I know that it's really the other way around. I never knew there was a Golden Age of comics. I never imagined that comic books had a history behind them.

Cap's history got all mixed up in the fifties, what with that other guy, that 1950's Cap. It created a lot of contradictory storylines, which Roger Stern was able to sort out and make sense of. Roger loves doing those kinds of stories.

When we did the *Cap For President* story, it was a germ of an idea planted in Roger's head when Roger McKenzie wanted Cap to run for President, win, and then do four years of Cap as President stories. Stern said no, because that's not the way the Marvel Universe works. But, years later, he re-wrote the idea, changing the focus to what Cap's reaction would be when nominated.

When I draw Cap I try and make him a combination of Hercules' body with Spider-Man's agility. It's a very contradictory approach, I know. Cap is so big he looks like he can barely comb his hair, and yet he's bouncing around like a gymnast.

Probably my favorite issues of my run were the Baron Blood ones. I'd say the Mr. Hyde and Batroc were our weakest. There's a quantum leap in quality between those two works! I like Baron Blood for a few reasons. I'm a big Invaders fan. I'm a big Frank Robbins fan. And I enjoy taking funky looking villains and re-creating them into not-so-funky villains. At the time I thought I did a good job with the Baron, but now, years later, I look back and realize he's just as funky as he ever was!

ROGER STERN
writer

I remember in AVENGERS #8 when Cap took on a dozen wrestlers and knocked them silly. He's incredibly tough, yet nonchalant about his power. There was another instance of Cap's cool-headedness when Cap was home alone and a group of burglars broke into Avengers Mansion, thinking "Hey — it's only Captain America. It's not like he has any super powers!" Cap knocks them silly with relative ease. "Lucky for you the rest of the Avengers weren't here!" He says to them. Is this guy modest, or what?

RED SKULL!... CROSSBONES... KING COBRA... BATROC... FLAG-SMASHER... AND THE VIPER, HMMM?
THAT'S IT? NO BARON ZEMO? MACHINESMITH? SIDEWINDER? ARNIM ZOLA? MISTER HYDE?
I'M PARTICULARLY DISAPPOINTED ADAMOVLO DIDN'T MAKE IT.

Cap has an ideological bent to him... there's no denying that. But politics are always shifting, so it's difficult to do political stories with him...or anyone, for that matter. The story can be obsolete before it prints. But in the sense of Cap upholding America's basic principals in the broadest sense, that's something that I don't think will ever really go out of style.

When Cap is in a story, it becomes a Captain America story, whether it's in his own book, the Avengers, or a Secret Wars. Only Doctor Doom has that effect on a story. If Doom is in it, even briefly, it becomes a Doctor Doom story. They're probably the only two Marvel characters who can take center stage like that.

RALPH MACCHIO
editor

My earliest encounter with Cap was an issue of STRANGE TALES when Captain America came back to battle the Human Torch. I'd never heard of him. Then, in the end of the story when it was revealed that it *wasn't* the real Captain America, but you could write in if you wanted to see the real Captain America, I wasn't that interested. It turned out to be a guy called the Acrobat. I was more interested in the super powered guys.

I mean, a guy with no powers and a shield running around fighting the Torch? I wasn't very impressed. I didn't know anything about World War II, since I was very young at the time. I thought his history was all made up. I didn't know there *were* comics at that time.

My favorite foes would include the Red Skull, of course, because he's the ultimate plotter-schemer, and I don't think you'll find anybody as a villain, including Doom, who's spent more time as a totally evil, ruthless, Nazi, nihilist, businessman capitalist. He's revolved around Cap for 50 years now and you can still put them together and get a fascinating story. I like what Mark's doing with him, where he tortures himself on the rack. Another guy I like is Batroc, who became a buffoon over time, but he's one of the few guys who can physically match Cap. I'd like to see him become a tougher antagonist for Cap. I think we wasted his potential as a character. Doctor Faustus was physically big and imposing, but he used psychology to take it to Cap. So each of the three attacked different strengths of his, but obviously, keep failing.

It's been difficult to give him a private life. Mark's hit on it best, in that he really is Captain America. He can't be anything else. He's tried being a graphic artist, he's tried being a cop. There's just no opposite, no dichotomy of Matt Murdock being a lawyer, then donning red tights and being a vigilante. This guy is simply what he is in that uniform. The disguise is Steve Rogers, the identity is Captain America.

Mike Lackey

92 HOLIDAY BASH

You know, everybody needs to blow off some steam every now and then, especially after the holidays. That's why, last January 10, Marvel Comics had its official Holiday Bash. Now, we know what you're thinking — *why would they want to have a holiday bash 15 days after Christmas*? Well, it could have to do with Marvel's not wanting its staffers so burned out of holiday cheer that they would have any less than the maximum amount of fun at the official company party. Either that or they got the room cheaper.

It was a scene to see. Staffers and freelancers mingled. Marvel clients, such as licensees and printers, all got to meet face to face, after a year's worth of doing business over the phone. And hey — there was free food, too! A large projection TV showed episodes of the *Marvel Super Heroes* cartoon show, and boy were we glad we had Andy Mangel's episode guide from MARVEL AGE!

We had celebrity guests — like She-Hulk, Spider-Man, Captain America and Wolverine! There was dining and dancing, too. Even Stan Lee popped in to make sure that everybody had a happy face.

But every party has its casualties, and this party was no different. Editor Glenn Herdling lost his sports jacket. (No tip for that coat check girl!) Editor Rob Tokar lost his pair of eyeglasses! And inker Don Hudson broke his pair of glasses while dancing the night away with She-Hulk.

Thinking ahead, we sent that *Man With A Camera*, Eliot R. Brown, to cover this event in the tradition of his coverage of the 1991 Marvel Picnic. Gee Whiz! We should've called this issue *Eliot Age*!

1. Panoramic view of the festivities! Special No-Prize to the Marveloid who can name everybody in this picture!

2. MARVEL AGE editor Renée Witterstaetter and Mark Gruenwald dance — back to back!

3. Ericka Mitchell and Pat (I'm NOT Submissions Editor) Garrahy get hoi polol with Spider-Man.

4. Wolverine proves that you CAN run with scissors! Don't try this at home!

5. Klaus Janson, "Sassy" Marie Javins, Steve "Bucco" Buccellato, Alex "The Blonde" Morrisey and Kelly Corvese strike a pose, proving that Marvelolds can't vogue.

6. D.G. Chichester announces — "I just saw Kingpin begging for change on the subway!" while Larry Hama and Howard Mackie look on.

7. Cover-Boy Cap cuts the rug.

8. Editor Mike Rockwitz and intern James show us who is paying for the 1992 Marvel Holiday Bash.

9. Former manufacturing teammates Glenn Herdling and Christine Slusarz discuss why Glenn's books are late.

11. Comics legend and World's Toughest Proofreader Jack Abel (center), flanked by Mark Chiarello and Jack Morelli, looks nervous.

12. Inker Danny Fingeroth and Editor Evan Skolnick try to escape while letterer Rick Parker bear hugs Lisa Trusiani.

13. Marvel President Terry Stewart points at Mike Rockwitz's shirt. It was stunning!

14. 15 seconds before the dinner bell sounded. Bobbie Chase and Craig Kunashek can't wait!

15. MARVEL AGE designer Dawn Geiger does the "Production Dance" — much like an Indian rain dance. You keep on boogying until all your work magically gets done!

OOPS DEPARTMENT

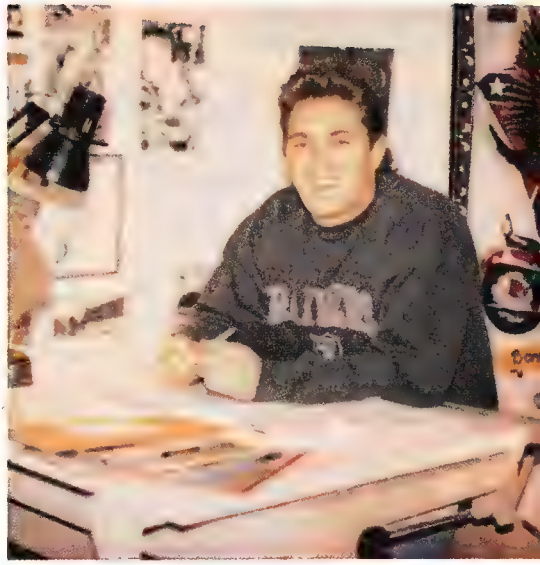
Here's a merry mishap we here at MARVEL AGE thought you might want to take a peek at. During the production of Marvel's 1992 MARVEL UNIVERSE TRADING CARDS, artist Ron Lim was given the incorrect specifications to produce his illustration of the Infinity War. *Ooops!*

Well, the Special Projects Department had Ron draw border art, which was later inked by Jimmy Palmiotti. This border art was then cut and pasted together to form one complete piece of art! *Cool, huh?*

Be sure to keep your eyes peeled for an in-depth feature on the 1992 Marvel Universe Trading Cards in an upcoming issue of MARVEL AGE!!

— Mike Lackey

FROM THE DESK OF RON GARNEY



MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: *How did you break into the business?*
RON: Comics were always an attraction to me as a kid, but I drifted away from them as I got older. In fact, I hadn't thought about them for years. Then one day I picked up a Mike Zeck issue of SECRET WARS and I was hooked! I worked up some samples and got some criticism from Mike who happened to live nearby, but I never followed up on it. About a year later, I worked up some new Captain America samples and Mike brought me up to Marvel. I got my first assignment that day.
MAM: *What was that?*
RON: G.I. JOE #110.
MAM: *From that story, I get the feeling you didn't have much art training.*
RON: Not really. I've been very fortunate. I always could draw. . .always seemed to have a feel for it.
MAM: *Since that first job what else have you penciled?*
RON: I did a year on MOON KNIGHT, DAREDEVIL #296, work on a DAREDEVIL annual and a Spider-Man holiday story which appeared in the Christmas special. I recently left the MOON KNIGHT series to take on another regular title, something new called NIGHTSTALKERS, a horror title that crosses over into the Marvel Universe.
MAM: *Why take the leap from the established title to something new?*
RON: It's a great opportunity, a great career move. It should get me some further notice in the industry.
MAM: *In the short time you've been at Marvel, you've been offered some very high profile assignments that you didn't leap at. Why?*
RON: I shoot for a very consistent level of quality and I wanted to be very careful about not over-extending myself. That'll also allow me to get ahead on my commitment to NIGHTSTALKERS so I can ease off a bit down the road and take on some other projects that will come along.
MAM: *Who are your influences?*
RON: People like Zeck, John Byrne, Neil Adams, John Buscema and John Romita, Jr. But I've found that you can pick up so much from almost any artist. Every artist has a quality of his own, something that makes you think about your own approach to the work. I've found that asking other artists to assess my work also helps. Not every artist wants to critique a fellow artist, but the comments can be invaluable.
MAM: *There's a lesson in there somewhere.*
RON: I tell aspiring artists when I look over their portfolios at conventions that they've got to learn how to listen to criticism. You can't let your ego stand in the way of making progress as an artist. You wouldn't believe the improvements you can make simply by listening and applying what you hear from the pros.
MAM: *What's a typical day at the drawing board like?*
RON: One thing I've learned is to keep the TV and radio off! My regular work schedule? Up at eight, breakfast, then upstairs to work until five and then off to the gym. The discipline is real important.
MAM: *Is getting away from the work every once in a while helpful to you?*
RON: Definitely. Penciling is pure enjoyment for me. If I overwork, I start resenting it. That shows in the quality of the work. I play sports, try to get out. During the summer, I take my drawing board to the beach and get some work done while unwinding a little.
MAM: *When you do sit down and start the day's work, do you warm-up before starting the pages?*
RON: Yeah. A lot of sketching. I found that when I didn't, I might have had to draw a figure five or six times to get the right balance. When I'm warmed-up, I get it right the first time.
MAM: *You work the "Marvel style" of penciling. That is, you draw the pages based on the writer's plot, rather than a finished script. How do you lay out the story?*
RON: First I do small, very loose thumbnails of each page. I then re-draw them on 11"x17" copy paper. I place that on a lightbox and then put a sheet of Marvel drawing paper over it and tighten it all up, doing my finished lines as I go along. Being that there's a constant light being shone on the pencils, working this way also helps me with my light sources.
MAM: *As an artist begins to develop some notoriety in this business, some "peachy" jobs often come along with it. Any mouth-watering assignments on the horizon in addition to NIGHTSTALKERS?*
RON: There's a Spider-Man/Deathlok four-part bookshelf series that I'm penciling which should be out in '93. Greg Wright is writing it and Keith Williams is slated to do the inks.
MAM: *Working with newcomers to the business has always been the most satisfying part of my job as an editor. I know the advice I give to new pencilers. How about you?*
RON: For newcomers already in the industry, I tell them that they've got to remember that not every page or panel they do will be their last. You should certainly pay careful attention to your mistakes, but you can't get too hung up on the slight imperfections in everything you do. You've got to put it aside and move ahead. I go back to my old stuff and study it to see if I'm making the improvements that I want.
MAM: *Everyone in the business has an ironic tale to relate. What's yours?*
RON: Just the fact that it was Mike Zeck's work that got me hooked. It was only much later that I learned that he lived so close and ultimately, that it was Mike who helped me break into the business!

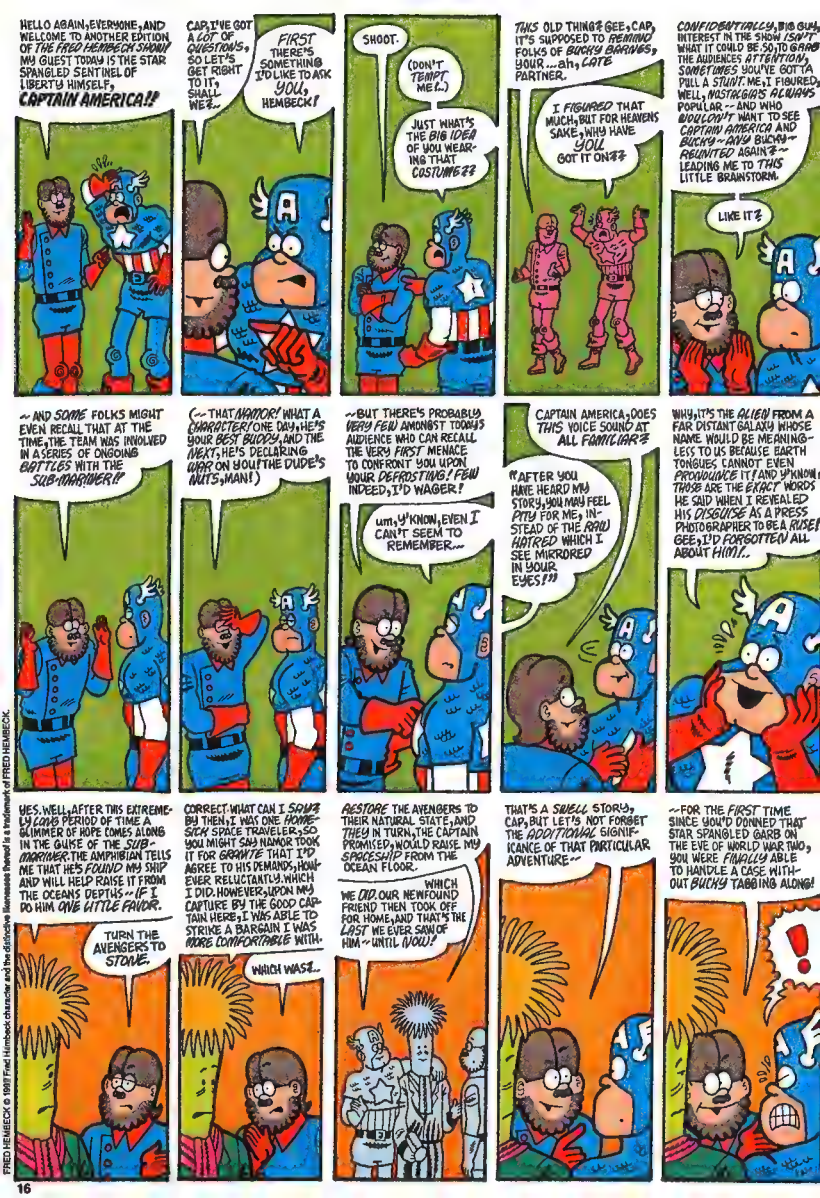
FROM THE DESK OF DENYS COWAN

1) MARVEL AGE: *Describe a typical day for Denys Cowan.*
DENYS: Wake up around 7:00. . .fix my wife breakfast. . .kiss my kid. . .and get to work at my studio by 8:30. I stay there till about 7:30 at night. I'm usually there for about 11 or 12 hours.
2) MA: *Why do you work at a studio instead of at home?*
DENYS: I get more work done at the studio. At home there's the TV, Nintendo. . .all the temptations are there.
3) MA: *Who are the other artists in your studio?*
DENYS: J.J. Birch of FOOLKILLER and upcoming MOON KNIGHT stories. Joe James and Steve Harris, who are my assistants and future superstars. And Noelle Giddings, an illustrator/colorist who is doing a lot of stuff for Marvel.
4) MA: *Do you do any work at home?*
DENYS: I have a drawing board at home I use on weekends.
5) MA: *What are you working on at the moment?*
DENYS: DEATHLOK. . .some HELLRAISER stories. . .As far as future projects, there's a PUNISHER WAR ZONE comic written by Howard Chaykin. . . that'll be inked by Kent Williams, who I worked with on the PRINCE comic for your Distinguished Competition. . . . He also worked with me on a St. George job for CRITICAL MASS. . . and we collaborated on two DEATHLOK covers — issues six and seven with the Punisher.
6) MA: *Recently you inked Jackson Guice on a DEATHLOK cover. How did you like that?*
DENYS: It was great. Hopefully I'll work with Jackson again. He's really talented.
7) MA: *How do you like working on DEATHLOK?*
DENYS: I love working on DEATHLOK. It's a character I grew up with. . .He's THE character that really got me into comics in the early 70s.
8) MA: *You were the artist on the NIGHT CAT comic which I wrote with Stan Lee and Jim Salicrup. how did you like working on that?*
DENYS: It was a real rush job — they needed it yesterday. It was pleasant. . .I got to draw a pretty girl. . .I finally met (the real-life Night Cat) after the book was done. She had no idea who I was.
9) MA: *After Prince and NIGHT CAT, you're almost the official rock and roll comics artist.*
DENYS: I'd love to work on any other rock and roll project. But I wouldn't want to do any more NIGHT CAT — I feel we already made the statement with that

book. I like rock and roll — it's almost as good as rap music. I listen to all kinds of music when I work. My favorite is Public Enemy — the greatest rap group in the world. P.E.
10) MA: *How did the PUNISHER WAR ZONE assignment come about?*
DENYS: I just wandered into Don Daley's office one day. I was looking at the excellent work that John Romita Jr. and Klaus Janson were doing on WAR ZONE. Don asked me if I wanted to d a WAR ZONE story, so. . .I thought abut it for a couple of seconds, and then I called a couple of friends.
11) MA: *How closely do you work with your assistants?*
DENYS: It depends on the job. I work closely with them to ensure that the quality my editor and the reader expects to see is there. I'm not so much a leader as a guide. I can't show them how to do it. I can only point them in the right direction.
12) MA: *What do your assistants do for you?*
DENYS: They research reference. . . They finish backgrounds. . .I bounce story ideas off of them. . .
13) MA: *Do you ink your own pencils?*
DENYS: On HELLRAISER, I inked my own pencils. . .but not on DEATHLOK. I've done it for other companies. I ink all the DEATHLOK covers. I would like to ink a whole issue of DEATHLOK some day. Certainly Mike Manley is doing a great jobn of inking me, but I'd like to do it just to do it.
14) MA: *Recently you appeared in a print ad for Dewar's whiskey. How did you get that job?*
DENYS: Well, basically — nobody believes this — but they called me, through an intermediary. This advertising agency called and asked would I be interested in doing a Dewars ad. I said, "When is it due?" I thought it was an assignment as an artist, doing comps, doing advertising art. So I asked did they know when it was due, what was the concept. They said, "No, you don't understand, we want you to be in a Dewars ad." I was shocked. I said, "Of course I'll do it."

The first set of photos was done in black and white by a very talented photographer named Greg Heisler. Then the Dewars marketing people decided to do a second set in color. My ad was the first color ad for Dewars. You know those "profile" ads that are done by the Gap, Amoretto, Timex. . .Dewars started those.
15) MA: *Did you see the Rob Liefeld commercial for Levi's?*
DENYS: Yeah. I liked it. Spike's a very talented director.
16) MA: *Would you like to do more advertising work?*
DENYS: Sure. If another opportunity came up, I'm sure I'd think about it. . .and then I'd do it!

— "Big Barkin' Up the Wrong Tree"
Barry Dutter


HELLO AGAIN, EVERYONE, AND WELCOME TO ANOTHER EDITION OF THE FRED HEMBECK SHOW! MY GUEST TODAY IS THE STAR SPANGLED SENTINEL OF LIBERTY HIMSELF, CAPTAIN AMERICA!!
CAP, I'VE GOT A LOT OF QUESTIONS, SO LET'S GET RIGHT TO IT, SHALL WE?..
FIRST THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU, HEMBECK!
SHOOT.
(DON'T TEMPT ME..)
JUST WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA OF YOU WEARING THAT COSTUME??
THIS OLD THING? GEE, CAP, IT'S SUPPOSED TO REMIND FOLKS OF BUCKY BARNES, YOUR...AH, LATE PARTNER.
I FIGURED THAT MUCH, BUT FOR HEAVENS SAKE, WHY HAVE YOU GOT IT ON??
CONFIDENTIALLY, BIG GUY, INTEREST IN THE SHOW ISN'T WHAT IT COULD BE. SO, TO GRAB THE AUDIENCES ATTENTION, SOMETIMES YOU'VE GOTTA PULL A STUNT. ME, I FIGURED, WELL, MISTAGGIO'S ALWAYS POPULAR -- AND WHO WOULDN'T WANT TO SEE CAPTAIN AMERICA AND BUCKY -- ANY BUCKY -- REUNITED AGAIN? -- LEADING ME TO THIS LITTLE BRAINSTORM.
LIKE IT?
-- AND SOME FOLKS MIGHT EVEN RECALL THAT AT THE TIME, THE TEAM WAS INVOLVED IN A SERIES OF ONGOING BATTLES WITH THE SUB-MARINER!!
(-- THAT NAMOR! WHAT A CHARACTER! ONE DAY, HE'S YOUR BEST BUDDY, AND THE NEXT, HE'S DECLARING WAR ON YOU! THE DUDE'S NUTS, MAN!)
--BUT THERE'S PROBABLY VERY FEW AMONGST TODAY'S AUDIENCE WHO CAN RECALL THE VERY FIRST MENACE TO CONFRONT YOU UPON YOUR DEBUTS, TING! FEW INDEED, I'D WAGER!
UM, Y'KNOW, EVEN I CAN'T SEEM TO REMEMBER...
CAPTAIN AMERICA, DOES THIS VOICE SOUND AT ALL FAMILIAR?
"AFTER YOU HAVE HEARD MY STORY, YOU MAY FEEL PITY FOR ME, INSTEAD OF THE RAW HATRED WHICH I SEE MIRRORED IN YOUR EYES!"
WHY, IT'S THE ALIEN FROM A FAR DISTANT GALAXY WHOSE NAME WOULD BE MEANINGLESS TO US BECAUSE EARTH TONGUES CANNOT EVEN PRONOUNCE IT! AND Y'KNOW, THOSE ARE THE EXACT WORDS HE SAID WHEN I REVEALED HIS DISGUISE AS A PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER TO BE A RUSE! GEE, I'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT HIM!..
YES. WELL, AFTER THIS EXTREMELY LONG PERIOD OF TIME A GLIMMER OF HOPE COMES ALONG IN THE GUISE OF THE SUB-MARINER. THE AMPHIBIAN TELLS ME THAT HE'S FOUND MY SHIP AND WILL HELP RAISE IT FROM THE OCEANS DEPTHS -- IF I DO HIM ONE LITTLE FAVOR.
TURN THE AVENGERS TO STONE.
CORRECT. WHAT CAN I SAY? BY THEN, I WAS ONE HOMESICK SPACE TRAVELER, SO YOU MIGHT SAY NAMOR TOOK IT FOR GRANTE THAT I'D AGREE TO HIS DEMANDS. HOWEVER RELUCTANTLY. WHICH I DID. HOWEVER, UPON MY CAPTURE BY THE GOOD CAPTAIN HERE, I WAS ABLE TO STRIKE A BARGAIN I WAS MORE COMFORTABLE WITH.
WHICH WAS?..
RESTORE THE AVENGERS TO THEIR NATURAL STATE, AND THEY IN TURN, THE CAPTAIN PROMISED, WOULD RAISE MY SPACESHIP FROM THE OCEAN FLOOR.
WHICH WE DID. OUR NEWFOUND FRIEND THEN TOOK OFF FOR HOME, AND THAT'S THE LAST WE EVER SAW OF HIM -- UNTIL NOW!
THAT'S A SWELL STORY, CAP, BUT LET'S NOT FORGET THE ADDITIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THAT PARTICULAR ADVENTURE --
-- FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE YOU'D DONNED THAT STAR SPANGLED GARB ON THE EVE OF WORLD WAR TWO, YOU WERE FINALLY ABLE TO HANDLE A CASE WITHOUT BUCKY TAGGING ALONG!
!
FRED HEMBECK © 1997 Fred Hembeck character and the distinctive likenesses thereof is a trademark of FRED HEMBECK.

ABSOLUTELY NOT. I THINK IT'S AN INSIDIOUSLY WASCOSTICALLY CLEVER MACHIAVELLY OF AN IDEA THAT DESPOILS THE MEMORY OF THE FINEST, BRAVEST INDIVIDUAL THAT I'VE EVER HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF KNOWING, AND FOR YOU TO EXPLOIT HIS BODY FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL GAIN! IS DOWNRIGHT SICK AND TWISTED.
WELL, THAT'S SHOW BIZ!
ANYWAY, BE THAT AS IT MAY, WE'VE GOT A LOT OF GROUND TO COVER HERE--AFTER ALL, WE'RE CELEBRATING FOUR HUNDRED ISSUES HERE, BIG FELLA--AND TO DO THAT, I THOUGHT WE'D GO BACK TO WHERE IT ALL STARTED FOR YOU--AT LEAST ON THIS GO ROUND--AVENGERS #4.
NOW, MOST FOLKS REMEMBER HOW THE AVENGERS FOUND YOUR BODY FLOATING IN THE OCEAN AND IN THE PROCESS OF THAWING OUT AFTER TWO DECADES IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION--
CAP, SAY HELLO TO THE VERY FIRST RUFFIAN YOU ROUNDED UP AFTER THE ICE MELTED!
GREETINGS, CAPTAIN. IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
AND YOU, YOU'RE LOOKING... uh, WELL.
MM, BUT YOU TWO MAKE QUITE THE CORDIAL DUO. PRETTY SURPRISING WHEN YOU CONSIDER THAT OUR ALIEN FRIEND HERE HAD TURNED THE REST OF THE AVENGERS INTO STONE, LEAVING YOU TO TRACK HIM DOWN IN HOPES OF REVERSING YOUR NEW FOUND ALLIES PREDICAMENT.
TRUE, FRED, BUT IT WASN'T ENTIRELY HIS DOING.
NO? BUT WAS IT NOT HE WHO FIRED THAT DEADLY WEAPON AT YOUR HAPLESS TEAMMATES?
YES, I'M AFRAID IT WAS ME, BUT PLEASE, YOU MUST UNDERSTAND--I WAS ONE DESPERATE ALIEN.
EXPLAIN.
YOU SEE, CENTURIES AGO, MY SPACE SHIP CRASH-LANDED ON EARTH, IMBEDDING ITSELF DEEP INTO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA. THOUGH I MEANT NO HARM, AS A MATTER OF SELF DEFENSE TO WARD OF THOSE WHO POSED A DANGER TO ME, I USED THIS RUN GUN TO, WELL, TO TURN THOSE EARTHLINGS INTO STONE.
WHOO! WASN'T THAT KINDA SEVERE? I MEAN, YOU COULDA JUST SCARED 'EM WITH THE NAME OF YOUR BARBER!?
LOOK AT THE HAIR, FRED! OBVIOUSLY, MR. UNPRONOUNCABLE HERE SPAWNED THE ANCIENT LEGEND OF MEDUSA!
HMM. NOT TO MENTION THE HAIR CLUB FOR INTERGALACTIC BEINGS! AND I'LL BET HE'S NOT JUST THE PRESIDENT, HE'S A MEMBER!!
OH, SURE, YOU PROBABLY MISSED HIM A BIT AT FIRST, BUT ADMIT IT, IT HAD TO BE NICE NOT TO HAVE A KID UNDERFOOT ALL THE TIME.
I MEAN, LET'S FACE IT, KEEPING TRACK OF SOME FLAKEY TEENAGER WOULD GET ON ANYBODYS NERVES AFTER AWHILE. I BET THERE WERE PLENTY OF TIMES WHEN THE WHOLE KID SIDEKICK SCHTICK SEEMED MORE TROUBLE THAN IT WAS WOR--
ZTTT!
KNOCK KNOCK
THANKS.
NO PROBLEM. I OWED YOU ONE.

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes!

For some reason I'm in a sentimental mood today, so how about a walk with me down memory lane?

The thing that triggered this, I guess, is the fact that I was thumbing through the latest batch of Marvel titles and I started mentally comparing them to the first magazines I ever worked on when I was a teenager starting out in comics.

I know it's hard to believe today, but the price of those early comic books was only — honest, I'm not exaggerating — only ten cents! And what's more, each and every issue contained (oh, it almost brings tears to my eyes) a full sixty-four pages! Yep, you read it right — sixty-four pages for a dime!

Of course, you've got to remember in those days you could buy a brand-new automobile for less than a thousand dollars — and they'd throw in a free tank of gas! I mean, I'm going back to the late 1930's and early '40's! Hey, how many people do you know who were even alive then?

Here are some other little known facts guaranteed to do you absolutely no good at all. There are many things we take for granted today, such as television, which weren't even in existence in those days. But here's one you probably never thought of — ball-point pens. Let me tell you about them, and how they changed my life.

When I started in comics, ball-point pens were unheard of. They simply didn't exist. We either used fountain pens or simple pen-holders with nibs that we dipped into inkwells in order to write. That situation was a disaster for guys like me who are left-handed. Can you guess why? If you can't, here's the scoop. Right-handed people usually hold their pens so that the pen follows their hand as they move along the paper. However, most lefties push their pens along the paper in a direction from left to right, with their left hand *following* the direction of the pen.

I can almost hear you muttering, "What planet-plucking difference does it make whether the hand follows the pen or the pen follows the hand?" Ah, glad you asked.

Just imagine, if you will, a world before ball-point pens. You're writing with a pen that uses old-fashioned ink, ink that takes about half a minute to dry. Now imagine (and I know you've got a good imagination or else you wouldn't be a merry Marvel madman!) that you're holding your pen in your left hand, in that strange way that most lefties write, with their wrist curved so that the pen is followed by the hand. That means that the fingers of your left hand continually glide over the words you've just written, thereby smudging the ink which hasn't yet dried! I know it probably sounds totally trite to you now, but in those days it was a monumental problem for those of us who were left-handed and had a lot of writing to do. That's why the ball-point pen, which uses ink that dries immediately when it hits the paper, was such a boon to lefties everywhere. And to think that you've been callously taking ball-points for granted all this time!

Speaking of writing, it now behooves us to discuss another invention which has changed our lives even more (if you can conceive of such a thing) than the ball-point pen! Naturally, I'm talking about the ubiquitous, virtually indispensable personal computer!

Once again I call upon you to use that magnificent, Marvel-honed imagination of yours. Try to picture someone, years ago, writing a story or script on a typewriter rather than a computer. Here again, I speak from personal, though painful, experience.

Let's say it's the fifties and you had just written a page. You then proofread it and decided you'd like to make some changes. Well, with only a humble typewriter at your disposal, all you could do is waste precious time totally retyping the entire page to accommodate the changes you wanted. Or, you had another, equally distasteful choice. You could stop everything and reach for a scissors and a paste pot. You could then type your correction on another page, cut it out and paste it over the original page. But, what if your correction took up more or less space than the original copy? As you can imagine, you would end up spending more time trying to figure out how to fit the paste-up neatly on the page than you spent in actually writing the story itself!

One thing that often happened in those primitive, pre-computer days was — the writer wouldn't even bother to make a needed correction because it would be too much work and would waste too much time, even though that correction might have improved his or her script.

Today however, as anyone who has ever used a computer for word processing knows, nothing could be easier than adding, altering or eliminating copy. Although, until they invent a computer that will actually make up the stories for its master, there's obviously a lot of development yet to be done!

There's one other thing that may not have occurred to you. In the early days of comics there were no Xerox copying machines. If we wanted to make a copy of a drawing, we had to use a huge, cumbersome device called a photostat machine which was so big it usually had a whole room devoted all to itself, and it needed a specially trained technician to operate it. In all the years I worked in the bullpen, I always wanted to learn how to use that monstrous machine, but never got around to it. That's why being able to handle today's simple copying machines gives me a heady feeling of pride and power which was denied me in the past!

Well, that's all the space for now. But in some future issue I'll tell you what things were like even further in the past, like when I used to scratch comic book scripts on the walls of caves. As I worked, I can still remember muttering, "Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate." I had to; nobody spoke English in those days!

Excelsior!

Stan

— Stan Lee

WILLIE LUMPKIN

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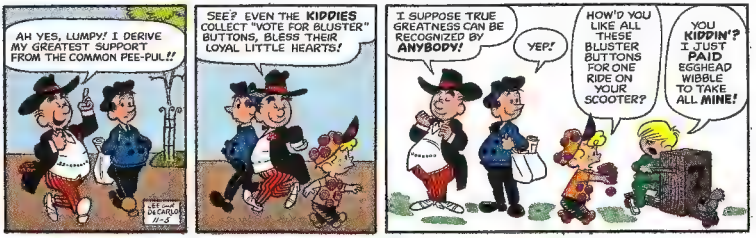
AH YES, LUMPY! I DERIVE MY GREATEST SUPPORT FROM THE COMMON PEE-PUL!!
LEE and DeCARLO 11-5
SEE? EVEN THE KIDDIES COLLECT "VOTE FOR BLUSTER" BUTTONS, BLESS THEIR LOYAL LITTLE HEARTS!
I SUPPOSE TRUE GREATNESS CAN BE RECOGNIZED BY ANYBODY!
YEP!
HOW'D YOU LIKE ALL THESE BLUSTER BUTTONS FOR ONE RIDE ON YOUR SCOOTER?
YOU KIDDIN'? I JUST PAID EGGHEAD WIBBLE TO TAKE ALL MINE!

"GREAT" MOMENTS IN MARVEL HISTORY

Last time around, we presented six covers that all featured the same theme — a bunch of guys on the left side of the cover attacking a bunch of guys on the right. This has been a tried and true cover idea for years. In fact, we found so many covers featuring that same idea, we couldn't fit 'em all on one page! So this month, we'll do it again. What a country! I get paid twice for the same idea!

Featured on this page are yet another five covers that all feature the same basic idea: people on the left vs. people on the right. The idea seems to pop up quite a bit in the AVENGERS, as seen on the covers to issues 70, 130 and 141. More recently, the same cover theme has popped up in CAPTAIN PLANET #6 and X-FACTOR #5.

Somehow, we get the idea we'll be devoting one of these pages to this same idea again some day! Thanks once again "Freaky" Fabian Nicieza and "Earnest" Evan Skolnick for inspiring the topic for the past two "Great" Moments installments. That's all for now. See you next month!

— "Big Breakin' All the Rules" Barry Dutter

NYC CON '92

Comic book conventions can be a lot of fun. You get to plunge neck-deep into huge inventories of comics from all eras . . .See the actual books that made history. . .Like FANTASTIC FOUR #1, HULK #1, AMAZING FANTASY #15. . . that you can actually buy, if you've got the bucks. You have the opportunity to meet and greet the true professionals of the business, and ask them all those goofy questions you always wanted to ask. You can have the best in the biz critique your portfolio (if you dare!) and offer sage advice on how you can get into the industry.

All in all, the 1992 New York Con was a big hit. Marvel had a booth set up to meet & greet the fans, and pass out free X-MEN buttons and other groovy collectables. Many a fan walked away with those Marvel Editor's Trading Cards we've been telling you about, believe us!

All the Marvel staffers got lovely printed guest name tags, and complimentary admission. However, somehow, SALES TO ASTONISH editor Kevin Tang and myself, WCW & MARVEL AGE writer Mike Lackey got incredibly dissed and didn't get printed name tags. The convention guy at the door said, *Look buddy, I got a list of all you Marvel guys right here, and your name ain't on it!*

The rest of the day went smoothly. The Con was such a hit that over 3,000 people showed up, which threw NYC's Fire Marshall into such a tizzy that 300 people were ejected, and the Con itself had to shut down for an hour. Things eventually calmed down, and the festivities proceeded according to plan.

The esteemed *Man With A Camera* Eliot R. Brown was on hand to chronicle the day. On the next few pages you'll see the fruits of this man's labor.

1. The Official Marvel Convention Booth: Swarmed with eager fans, ready to have their artwork looked at by the seasoned pros. Whew!

2. X-MEN editor Bob Harras sits with X-MEN artist-scribe Jim Lee to field questions from 3,000 fans. The line to see these guys went around the block!

3. Artist Rod Ramos and Chuck Frazier spike the camera while inker extraordinaire Keith Williams reads comic books.

4. EPIC fans swarm artist Larry Stroman for autographed ALIEN LEGION and X-FACTOR issues. Everybody at Marvel had so much fun at the Con that they talked about it for days!

6. Mike Zeck signs a PUNISHER comic book, while telling this fan about the special Captain America MARVEL AGE issue. Hey — we're not making this up.

7. WCW inker Don Hudson tosses Twinkies at the crowd after Mark Gruenwald's "Eat-a-Twinkie" contest. Editor David Wohl challenged an audience member to a one on one Twinkie Eat-a-Thon for the big prize of a WAM! membership kit. David took a dive.

5. AMAZING SPIDER-MAN artist and MARVEL TRY-OUT winner Mark Bagley was on hand, too!

8. ¡Gulag Marvel-Pelago — where bad editors go when they ignore continuity or proper procedure. Renée Witterstaetter throttles Gruenwald for being late with an M's Rems column.

9. The Dating Game: Who will Silver Sable choose to be her man? Left to right: Glenn Herdling as host Chuck Lunch, Renée W. as Silver Sable, Rob Tokar as Nomad, Don H. as Cage, and Mark G. as Slapstick.

10. TUFF TALK: Wolverine and Lobo tell Captain America how he's inspired them to be freakazoid homicidal maniacs. "Hey Cap — that Baron Blood thing was great!"

11. Crossover Classics #79! Wolverine and Lobo go toe to toe! "I'm the best there is at what I do — and what I do ain't pretty!"

12. No cameras! No cameras!

13. Curtain Call: Kevin "No Badge" Tang, Mike "Dissed Again" Lackey, David Wohlverine, Don "You've Got The Wrong Sentinel Of Liberty" Hudson, Mark "No Nickname" Gruenwald, Renee "Just Get Off the Stage" Witterstaetter, Glenn "Musical Hands" Herdling, and Rob "I'll Never Get This Make-up Off" Tokar."

The Official, *All-New*

Marvel Age Readers Poll

This is it...your chance to chart the course for the *new Marvel Age*. Beginning with issue #115, we're launching *Marvel Age* in dramatic new directions, with changes designed to give you the inside track here at Marvel Comics. It means more photo spreads, behind-the-scenes coverage and new entertainment features.

Most important, it means a direct line between *Marvel Age* and our readers. This magazine exists for *you*, and we want to know what you want to see. Let us know which of our existing features you want us to keep, and what *new* features you want us to inaugurate. Just fill out this handy ballot (or any reasonable facsimile thereof).

Please *don't* abandon my favorite features in *Marvel Age:*

- ❑ Andy Mangels' Reel Marvel
- ❑ Great Moments in Marvel History
- ❑ Hembeck's Page
- ❑ Mark's Remarks
- ❑ Marvel Age Calendar
- ❑ The Marvel Age of Comics
- ❑ Marvel Age Pro-File
- ❑ Marvel Age Super Shopper Gallery
- ❑ Marvel Comics Price Guide
- ❑ Marvel Correspondents
- ❑ Marvel Top Ten
- ❑ Marvel Trivia Quiz
- ❑ Mondo Marvel Comics
- ❑ Stan's Soapbox

While you're at it, let's see some great *new* features in the decidedly-different ***Marvel Age,*** features like:

- ❑ "Ask the Pros"
- ❑ Celebrity columns
- ❑ Collectors market reports
- ❑ New comic strips
- ❑ Photo covers
- ❑ Reader polls on subjects like:

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- ❑ Special WAM features including:

_____

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- ❑ Other special features:

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(Use additional pages if you need to.)

So fill out the ballot and send it to:

Marvel Age Readers' Poll
c/o Marvel Comics
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016

Your name:_____ **Age:**_____

Street address:_____

City:_____ **State:**____ **Zip:**_____

(Please print.)

This is it...your chance to shape the future! And it's only the beginning. In the coming months, we'll expect to hear from you on a regular basis. As of today, you've been recruited as part of the main ***Marvel Age*** council of advisors. It's up to you to live up to this great responsibility. ***VOTE !!***

MARK'S REMARKS

In every other column for the past few months, I've been discussing the fictional construct we call the Marvel Universe. I've likened it to a sandbox which a bunch of us kids are playing in, a sandbox whose basic framework was built by master builders but has had many hands building additions and renovations over the years. I've likened it to a sandbox which has its own guidelines and standards for all those who choose to play in it. I've covered what it's like to be a writer toiling in the communal sandbox. I explained that these problems lead to mistakes, discontinuities, and discrepancies.

This time out I'd like to talk about the impact and ramifications of these discrepancies. In short, these things contribute to a disjointed sense of universe. Every inconsistency hurts the integrity (literally: sense of oneness) of the fictional world known as the M.U. On one hand we can say, "Well, we blew it this month. We'll just have to try that much harder next month." On the other hand, bad stories *never* go away. As long as there is a single copy in a single reader's hands out there, the story exists, and we have to deal with it and live it down somehow.

The way we choose to deal with inconsistent stories after the fact varies. Minor slips are usually treated like mere proofreading errors and ignored. Major gaffes are often addressed more immediately. And then there are, of course, the stalwart sticklers and feckless fixers of old continuity blunders — guys who make it a point of pride to rehash the past in flashback in order to smooth out past rough spots. As often as my writing has been lumped in with that of the continuity-rehash crew, an examination of my body of work would reveal that my stories rarely address old inconsistency problems — I'm more interested in making the present interesting than making the past make sense.

Like with bad stories, bad characters never go away. There's this rap group called *Another Bad Creation*. Somehow the name of that band runs through my mind whenever I see an ill-conceived character limp into print for some reason or another. What makes a character bad? We must distinguish between good characters handled poorly and bad characters from their inception. A famous artist of the 60s once said there are no bad characters, only bad handling. I disagree. All characters are not created equally — more thought and consideration and originality go into some more than others. Of the 100 or so characters I'm responsible for bringing into being, I can state unequivocally that the same amount of inspiration and work did not go into all of them. I think I'm typical in this.

Though my job as sandbox custodian is to keep lame characters from coming into being, I must admit that there are uses for lame characters of the past. Personally, I love it when characters who have appeared in Marvel Universe series of less fan repute or respectability are rehabilitated and become useful, productive members of more respected series. The list of characters who have gone beyond their humble beginnings are legion: Killer Shrike came out of BLOODSTONE to become a useful Spider-Man foe. Speedball was despised in his own book — as a member of New Warriors, he's a fun, unique addition to the team. Dr. Demonicus came out of GODZILLA to become a major AVENGERS WEST COAST foe. So am I being inconsistent here? Should I let lame characters hobble into existence just so we have fodder for future useful rehabilitated characters? No. There are plenty of lame characters to go around already, and just because a bad character can be made useful, there's no justification for the deliberate creation of one. To earn the right to exist, every new character must have at least one major thing about him or her

that makes him or her unlike any other character we (or anybody else) ever published.

Conversely, characters with noble beginnings can fall on very bad times through less than thoughtful usage. Terrific characters I personally feel have been diminished through inconsiderate use include Galactus, Doctor Doom, Galactus, Scarlet Witch, Galactus, Kang, Galactus, Supreme Intelligence, Galactus, Electro, and Galactus, to name but a few. Fortunately, bad stories with good characters can be lived down once the character starts appearing in good stories again. But it often takes twice as many good stories to counteract the stigma of the bad. In other words, if the Trapster appears in 4 bad stories in a row, it may take 8 good stories before the reading public will accept him as a worthy character again!

So what's my rationale behind the statement a few paragraphs ago that bad characters never go away? This: bad characters can never be uncreated. They exist forever. Once upon a time I didn't believe this. I thought if a character stinks and you kill him, he's gone. Then after doing MARVEL UNIVERSE for so many years, it sunk in that characters don't disappear when they die, they just get filed under another category! Turner D. Century is not dead and gone — he's just on the Actively Dead list, waiting for me to be on vacation and some recalcitrant writer to sneak him back into a story. If I had my way, characters would *never* die anymore, at least not until every last ounce of story potential was wrung out of him or her, and none who are dead would ever come back. John Donne said "Every man's death diminishes me for I am involved in mankind." I say "Every character's rebirth diminishes the Marvel Universe by robbing the concept of death of its dramatic impact." Since we're doing drama, not comedy, in most series set in the M.U., I see no point in conditioning readers to not believe in the awful finality of death anymore. I've reserved a special circle in Dante's Inferno for any writer (myself included) who manages by hook or crook to revive any character killed by Scourge. This doesn't include recycling names or costumes, this means literally bringing back one of the people who was actually pum-SPAKked by Scourge.

My opinion is not one universally shared. My esteemed colleague Fabian ***"I write more books than you, Gruenwald"*** Nicieza, for instance, has no problem (if I understand him correctly) with revivals of the seeming dead. If a character even has an ounce of untapped potential and happens to be dead, then "un-dead" him so he can have that potential explored, so sez Fabe. Fabian believes that if you give the fans good stories, it doesn't matter if the characters in the story were once believed to be dead — the fans care more about the quality of stories than the versimilitude (semblance of reality) of the universe as a whole. He may be right, he may be wrong. But since my job is universe-preserving and his job (as writer) is quality-story-providing, you can appreciate where our sensibilities derive from. And since my position in the organization is higher than his, my sensibility may have more influence with Mr. Life and Death Arbitrer (Tom DeFalco) when they're in opposition (they usually aren't, right, Fabe?). I can but hope.

Occasionally I get letters from readers who began their Marvel habit in the 60s and 70s who say that in their opinion the spirit of the Marvel Universe has died. It just got so distended, they say, so stretched out about the edges, so threadbare in areas, and overly dense and complicated in other areas that it's just not the fun place it used to be. Everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion, but obviously I disagree. While the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s Marvel Universe are characteristically different places, I feel they are good and rightful expansions and extensions of the same place I've read about since the beginning of time (1961). Yes, there have been times when parts of the universe got skewed, but like a river flowing around a log that's dropped in, the river is eventually going to dislodge and overpower the log. With Tom and me ever vigilant, the Marvel Universe despite its expansion (an expansion, I might add, that would not be happening if you readers didn't demand more books!) will remain a happy, homogenous place. For my money, the sandbox known as the Marvel Universe has many healthy years ahead ot it, and properly maintained, we'll never have to resort to any kind of wholesale implosion or continuity-shedding to keep it from collapsing under its own poorly distributed weight.

I hope this lengthy discussion of the Marvel Universe has been diverting. Let me know what you think of the the various points I've raised here if you're so inclined. Write me in care of this magazine.

— Mark Gruenwald

Welcome back to *Reel Marvel*, the column which focuses on Marvel's rich history of television and movie adaptations, both past, present, and future.

This is the fourth of five *Reel Marvel* columns (#108-112), providing a comprehensive guide to the 1965 *Marvel Super-Heroes* shows, all adapted directly from the comics of the day. Despite their limited animation, the shows have a cult following and video collectors and traders covet new and better copies of the many episodes.

Grant Simmons and Robert Lawrence joined together in 1965 as Grantray-Lawrence to produce the animated adventures of the *Marvel Super-Heroes*. The show premiered as a Saturday show on September 2, 1966 in Los Angeles, but was picked up as a daily show on the 12th in Chicago and other stations. *Captain America* was Monday, the *Incredible Hulk* was Tuesday, *Iron Man* was Wednesday, *Mighty Thor* was Thursday (naturally), and *Sub-Mariner* was Friday.

The cartoons were very limited in their animation, produced through a process called Xerography. Artwork was transferred directly from Marvel comics onto the animation cells, and then given a slight movement by jiggling the cell or sliding it across a background. Despite the cheap process, the show became a major hit, and still remains in syndication today.

Each show had thirteen three-chapter episodes. Each chapter had its own title, and was six minutes long. The *Mighty Thor* stories were taken from comics drawn by Jack Kirby, mainly early *Journey Into Mystery* and *Avengers* tales.

Episode #1/#6501-6503 (from Journey Into Mystery #88-89)
Trapped by Loki (pt. I)
Vengeance of Loki (pt. II)
The Defeat of Loki (pt. III)

Loki is released from his imprisonment within a tree, and sets out to challenge Thor by turning people into negative beings. He hypnotizes Thor to leave on a mission, but is thwarted when Thor reverts to Donald Blake. Thor defeats him once, but Loki returns and holds his hammer in a force field. Don tricks Loki and regains Mjolnir, sending Loki back to Asgard in shame.

Episode #2/#6504-6506 (from Journey Into Mystery #99-100)
Mysterious Mr. Hyde (pt. I)
Revenge of Mr. Hyde (pt. II)
Thor's Showdown With Mr. Hyde (pt. III)

Thor asks Odin to marry Jane Foster, while back on Earth, Don Blake's ex-employee, Mr. Hyde, breaks into his office. Back on Earth, Don is thrown out of the window by Mr. Hyde. He saves himself, but not before Thor is framed for robbery by the shape-changing Hyde. Thor must stop Hyde from stealing a Polaris Submarine and Jane, and clear his name in the process.

Episode #3/#6507-6509 (from Journey Into Mystery #114-115)
The Absorbing Man (pt. I)
In My Hands This Hammer (pt. II)
Vengeance of the Thunder God (pt. III)

Loki turns a criminal into The Absorbing Man, and Thor can't defeat him! He eventually finds the villain's weakness, but Loki spirits him and Jane Foster away. Giving the Absorbing Man even more power, Loki is thwarted when Thor causes him to absorb every element, overload, and explode!

Episode #4/#6510-6512 (from Journey Into Mystery #107)
The Grey Gargoyle (pt. I)
The Wrath of Odin (pt. II)
Triumph in Stone (pt. III)

Thor battles the Grey Gargoyle, who wants Thor's hammer. Turned to stone, Thor is freed when he is knocked over and his hammer strikes the ground. He defeats the villain and hurls him into the ocean, but is later stripped of his powers by Odin. When the gargoyle returns to kill Don Blake, the Asgardians send Valor to restore Thor's powers, just in time.

Episode #5/#6513-6515 (from Journey Into Mystery #118-119)
To Kill A Thunder God (pt. I)
The Day of the Destroyer (pt. II)
Terror of the Tomb (pt. III)

While Odin is in the "Sleep of Life,"

JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
12¢
98
NOV.
THINK YOU HAVE TROUBLES? WAIT TILL YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO...
THOR
WHEN HE MEETS...
THE HUMAN COBRA!
EVEN A THUNDER GOD CANNOT MATCH MY GREAT POWER... AS YOU ARE NOW ABOUT TO LEARN!!
ALSO: "TALES OF ASGARD!"---ODIN BATTLES THE ICE GIANTS!"

Loki revives the ancient Destroyer. Loki is gleeful as the Destroyer trounces Thor with his own hammer, until he finds that whoever wakes the Destroyer dies! Thor is seemingly disintegrated, but manages to return to reality in time to stop the Destroyer and save Loki's life! You'd think he'd be grateful, but nooooo.

Episode #6/#6516-6518 (from Journey Into Mystery #101-102)
The Tomorrow Man (pt. I)
The Return of Zarko (pt. II)
Slave of Evil (pt. III)

When a man from the future steals a Cobalt bomb, Thor must travel to the thirtieth Century to regain it. There he meets a group of super-powered teenagers who ask him to join their club. No, just kidding. Checking to see if you were awake. Thor fights Zarko and his giant robot, defeating them and returning with the bomb. When Odin cuts Thor's powers in half for loving Jane Foster, Loki brings Zarko and his robot to the present to defeat Thor. Zarko takes the now-enslaved Thunder God back to the future to help him control the world, but Thor has other plans.

Episode #7/#6519-6521 (from Journey Into Mystery #110-111)
Every Hand Against Him (pt. I)
The Power of the Thunder God (pt. II)
The Power of Odin (pt. III)

Mr. Hyde and the Cobra kidnap Jane and Loki convinces Odin Thor was a coward. Odin banishes Thor from Asgard (but for once doesn't take away his powers), and Thor tracks down Jane alone. When she's caught in a deadly explosion, Thor calls on his father for help. Odin helps save Jane's life, as Mr. Hyde and the Cobra battle Thor. Our hero wins yet again.

Episode #8/#6522-6524 (from Journey Into Mystery #124-126)
Enter Hercules (pt. I)
When Meet the Immortals (pt. II)
Whom The Gods Would Destroy (pt. III)

Furious that Thor has revealed his identity to a hospitalized Jane, Odin has Zeus send Hercules to Earth, and then forces Thor to fight the "Ritual of Steel." After facing the ritual, Thor is displeased to learn that Hercules is a big hit on Earth, and Jane is his new girlfriend (fickle, isn't she?). Thor fights Hercules, but is defeated when (you guessed it) an unhappy Odin takes half of Thor's powers away. Nevertheless, Thor and Jane are reunited.

Episode #9/#6525-6527 (from Journey Into Mystery #128-130)
The Power of Pluto (pt. I)
Verdict of Zeus (pt. II)
Thunder in Netherland (pt. III)

Pluto tricks Hercules into signing an Olympian contract to rule the Netherworld for eternity. Thor volunteers to fight to win Hercules' freedom, and defeats Pluto's hordes. Pluto must resume his post as head of the dead, while Hercules and Thor become best buddies. Awwww.

Episode #10/#6528-6530 (from Journey Into Mystery #91)
Chained Evil (pt. I)
Sandu, Master of the Supernatural (pt. II)
The Enchanted Hammer (pt. III)

Loki, chained to a rock until the end of time, still manages to steal Thor's hammer and get free. Thor triumphs over Loki's dragons, creating a new Uru hammer, but then comes in contact with supermagician Sandu, Loki's pawn. Though Sandu teleports Thor's hammer to another dimension, he can't pick it up and blows a telepathic gasket using his mind to try. Thor triumphs again.

Episode #11/#6531-6533 (from Journey Into Mystery #103-104)
The Enchantress and the Executioner (pt. I)
Giants Walk the Earth (pt. II)
Battle of the Gods (pt. III)

Odin, trying to make Thor forget Jane, sends the Enchantress to him on Loki's suggestion. Rejected by Don Blake, the Enchantress has the Executioner banish Jane to limbo. He'll return her in exchange for Thor's hammer, but when he does, the Enchantress is enraged. Thor regains Jane and sends the two villains back to Asgard. Meanwhile, Odin leaves Loki on the throne of Asgard to deal with Thor and his love, but soon finds that Loki has loosed Skag and Surfer to destroy the Earth, Loki, and Odin. With the help of Thor and Balder the Brave, Odin sends every living soul off Earth to a safe place (quite a trick!) and defeats the demons, banishing Loki.

Episode #12/#6534-6536 (from Journey Into Mystery #116)
At The Mercy of Loki (pt. I)
Trial of the Gods (pt. II)
Return to Earth (pt. III)

Loki escapes his banishment, and kidnaps Jane, bringing her to Asgard. Convincing Odin it was Thor's doing in a bid to make Jane immortal, Thor is put to a Trial of the Gods. Thor and Loki must both fight, without weapons, in the dreaded land of Scornheim. Thor defeats Yag the Slayer, and though Loki returns to Asgard first, Thor is declared the winner of the trial.

Episode #13/#6537-6539 (from Avengers #5)
Molto, the Lava Man (pt. I)
Invasion of the Lava Man (pt. II)
Living Rock (pt. III)

Thor and the Avengers must face the Lava Men, who want to invade Earth. They're pushing a "Living Rock" to the surface, which will explode and destroy all humans! The Avengers defeat the Lava Men and the Hulk throws the Living Rock into the air, where Thor destroys it with his hammer.

Thor went on to appear in other *Marvel Super-Heroes* cartoons, most notably in the *Captain America* and *Hulk* stories featuring the Avengers. *Thor* fans wishing to view the shows can find episodes on the upcoming *Thor* tape of Best Video's new *Marvel Comics* line, available at your local video or department stores. Episodes *#3* and *8* are on volume *#20*, and *17*, respectively, of the 24-volume *Marvel Comics Library* set released by Prism Video five years ago. Although they are out of print, many retail stores still stock them.

Next month, we'll conclude our guide to the *Marvel Super-Heroes* with all the episodes of the swimmingest, noblest prince of the sea, the *Sub-Mariner*/*X-Men* team-up that you never knew about! So fill those oxygen tanks, kick your fins, and splash over to next issue's *Reel Marvel!*

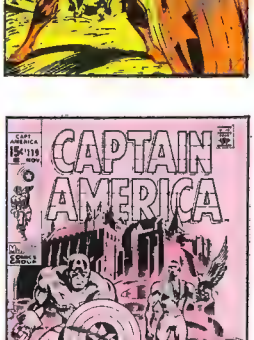
Over the tempest-tossed months of 1991, Marvel readers followed the saga of the INFINITY GAUNTLET, Jim Starlin's remarkable tale of the villain with ultimate power and the heroes who rose against all odds to defend the universe. Of course, long-time Marvelites knew that this latest Thanos epic was exploring in depth the themes of Starlin's first cosmic odyssey, in which Captain Marvel struggled to deprive Thanos of the Cosmic Cube.

CAPTAIN AMERICA #114 began with our hero in a considerable mood — as you might be if you'd just gone out of your way to convince the world you were dead! Steve Rogers' identity had been revealed to the public some two years before, in TALES OF SUSPENSE #95, but the revelation had caused him nothing but problems. In a series of tales by comics master Jim Steranko, the world now believed Steve Rogers had been killed in action against Hydra and returning scripter Stan Lee now had a blank slate for Cap's adventures. What better time to bring back Cap's deadliest enemy, more lethal than ever?

But the opening action of issue #114 gave no clue of its shock ending. Nick Fury grabbed Cap to rescue Sharon Carter from a cell of AIM agents. Broken-hearted in the wake of Cap's "death," Sharon was running a suicide mission against AIM's newest killer android, the Living Stiletto. Cap and Rick Jones (costumed as Bucky) came to Sharon's aid, only to argue with her afterward when Cap wanted Sharon to resign from the danger of her SHIELD job and Sharon couldn't make Cap understand the importance of her own career.

Desolate, Steve wandered New York, unable to get a room in anything but a rundown flophouse because he no longer had any valid identification. He felt as alone as alone could be. . .but not for long! Even anonymous as he was, he could be found by the power of the Cosmic Cube!

Issue #115, with John Buscema handling the art, detailed the Skull's recovery of the Cosmic Cube, the power of which had been glimpsed briefly years before in TALES OF SUSPENSE. Delighting in his newfound omnipotence, the Skull transported Cap through countless galaxies, fighting to drive him mad through sheer sensory overload. When that didn't work, the Skull (perhaps having read the smash DAREDEVIL #38 the year before and knowing a hit when he saw one), took his power one step further



— and used it to switch bodies with the star-spangled Avenger!

CAP #116 showed what happened to Cap, trapped in the Skull's body: the Avengers rejected his cries for help and the police nearly arrested him as they shot to kill. Meanwhile the Skull, enjoying the look of Cap's body on himself (as he would in a different fashion in the 1980s), drank in the affection of the public. Lucky for Sharon Carter that the Skull didn't push his masquerade too far! But the Skull's abuse of Cap's image did break the heart of Rick Jones — as Cap, the Skull made it clear he had no interest in a teenage sidekick. Rick exited the CAPTAIN AMERICA continuity, only to discover stranger new worlds as he stumbled into CAPTAIN AMERICA #117!

Tiring of watching Cap squirm his way through New York, the Skull transported Cap to Exile Island, where he knew that the maniacal Nazis known as the Exiles would kill "the Skull" on sight for his betrayal of them months before. Cap narrowly escaped death at the hands of that sinister six — Cadavus, Chang, Baldini, Gruning, Hauptmann and Krushki — before realizing that the Skull mask was only that: a mask. Removing the mask, Cap could walk Exile Island anonymously.

But he was still a long way from home and safety and he clearly needed allies. In his fight with the Exiles, just such allies appeared from above — the falcon Redwing, and his master Sam Wilson! Years before the disclosures about Sam Wilson's origin that would lead Marveldom to view him in a new light, Sam filled a need in Marvel continuity, for a black hero (there were precious few at the time) who came from the U.S. rather than a mystical African regime.

With Steve Rogers' training, Sam Wilson followed in his mentor's footsteps and became the Falcon, the newest super hero of 1969! Together they bested the Exiles, only to face danger more dire as the Skull summoned them back before his almighty presence.

But unbeknownst to the Skull, events were in motion that would unravel his schemes. AIM, under the leadership of Modok, knew that the Cosmic Cube was too powerful for anyone's hands (except theirs, of course, but that seemed fated not to be). Laboriously they worked on a process to neutralize the Cosmic Cube and their success came not a moment too soon to save Cap and the Falcon. The reception to Sam Wilson's debut was so strong that in less than two years, the book would be renamed: CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE FALCON!

A side note: Cap's image as the protector of the American Dream was controversial then as now! See the letters column of CAP #118 for a rousing discussion of Cap's role in the Vietnam War years, as articulated by soon-to-be scripter, Steve Gerber! (It only goes to show you never know what you'll find when you rummage among your old Marvels!)

Brian Nelson

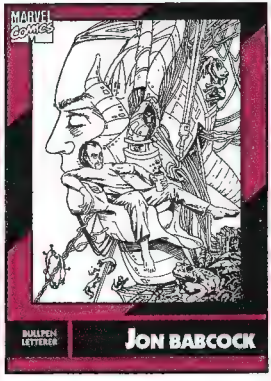
LAST BATCH??

Another issue of MARVEL AGE has ground to an end, folks. And we hope you've had as much enjoyment reading it as we've had creating it! Anyhoo, along with our latest batch of Assistant Editor & Bullpen Cards, we'd like to "hep" you to the very exciting MARVEL AGE #113. Klaus Janson talks about BLOOD & GLORY, the new Punisher & Captain America book, installment #600 of *Mark's Remarks & the New Talent Department*, the inside scoop on COPS; THE JOB, plus buckets of fun!

Salami salami baloney!

—Mike Lackey

MARVEL COMICS
OH YOU TO HECK, STEVE! WE'LL NEVER GET TO SPEND TIME TOGETHER ANYWHERE YOU ALWAYS SEEM SO DISTRACTED... HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO COMPETE WITH SOLLY HOW CAN I TELL JULIE THAT I'M REALLY SLEEPRIDER?
BULLPEN LETTERER
STEVE DUTRO



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WITH A MUTANT HERE, A MUTANT THERE, HERE MUTANTS, THERE MUTANTS, EVERYWHERE MUTANTS

Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

Attention correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your complete name and address, though we will gladly withhold that info on request!

This month's merrily musical letter column title comes to us from Aaron Mershon of Mansfield, Ohio. Thanks a lot, Aaron! Your catchy little ditty has become our favorite song, replacing that golden oldie, "Kingpin's men are falling down, falling down, falling down. . ." But before we all join in a rousing chorus or two, let's just take a sec to remind everyone out there that we need a snazzy new title for this column every single month. So what are you waiting for? If we use your idea, we'll even thank you right here in this very space.

Well, okay, not *this* very space, but one very much like it in another issue. Sheesh, some people can be so picky. . .

Dear MARVEL AGE,

I am a sixteen-year-old boy and I live in Holland. I have been collecting Marvel comics for over eight months now. It was hard to find out which comics I liked. I would like to buy them all but I can't because it is too expensive. But still, I am collecting 26 series. A few of my favorites are SHE-HULK, PUNISHER, MARVEL AGE, SPIDER-MAN and DARKHAWK.

I have a few questions:

1) Who was the first super hero ever?

2) What kind of comic book is THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE MASTER EDITION? And why is it so expensive?

3) When was the Punisher first introduced?

So until Arnold Schwarzenegger joins the Avengers, make mine Marvel!

José "Sonny Steelgrave" Steenwyk
(Address withheld by request)

Lotsa questions there, José. Let's tackle them in order, shall we?

1) Hmm. . .to tell you the truth, your first question is kind of a tough one, because it depends on how you want to define "super hero." Stories about heroes with greater-than-human powers date back thousands of years to mythological tales about the Greek and Norse gods and the Babylonian hero, Gilgamesh, not to mention all of the folks in the Bible. Even in more modern times, it depends on whether you want to count pulp magazine heroes such as the Shadow and Doc Savage, or comic strip types such as Flash Gordon and the Phantom. Heck, some people even count the super-strong Popeye as the first four-color hero!

Still, we're guessing that what you really want to know is who the first *comic book* super hero was, in which case the answer would probably be Superman, who debuted 'way back in 1938. Marvel (or Timely, as the company was called back then) jumped into the newsstand fray in 1939 with the first issue of MARVEL COMICS, which introduced the original Human Torch and the Sub-Mariner. Namor kind of got the jump on the Torch, though, having previously appeared in a black-and-white, promotional giveaway comic book called *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly*, so he's generally accepted as the first Marvel Comics hero.

Of course, if we really wanted to get some arguments going, we'd point out that a certain jungle lord by the name of Ka-Zar had already started to appear in text stories in his own pulp magazine in 1936, but you know how we hate to start trouble. Instead, we'll just mention that if you want to know more about the history of mighty Marvel and its characters, you might want to pick up a copy of Les Daniels' book, MARVEL: FIVE FABULOUS DECADES OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMICS. No foolin', it's a dandy!

2) Actually, the OHOTMU MASTER EDITION isn't a comic book at all! It's an encyclopedia of Marvel characters that tells you everything from how they got their powers to how much they weigh (which has led quite a few Marvel characters to hit the ol' Richard Simmons Deal-a-Meal). The reason it costs as much as it does is that it also costs more to produce than most comics books do, because of its high-quality paper, printing costs, and so forth. After all, now that we've finally put all of this in one place, we figure you'd want it built to last, n'est-ce pas?

3) Now that's an easy one. The Punisher first appeared in THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #129. Who says we can't be brief when we want to be?—

ANSWERS TO MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

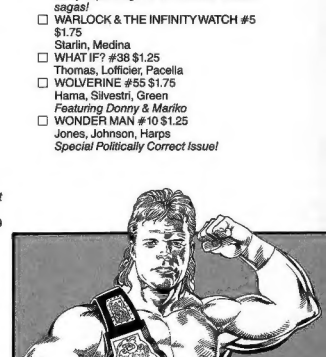
1. A	5. C	9. B
2. A	6. C	10. A
3. A	7. B	11. B
4. B	8. C	12. C

THE MARVEL® CHECKLIST

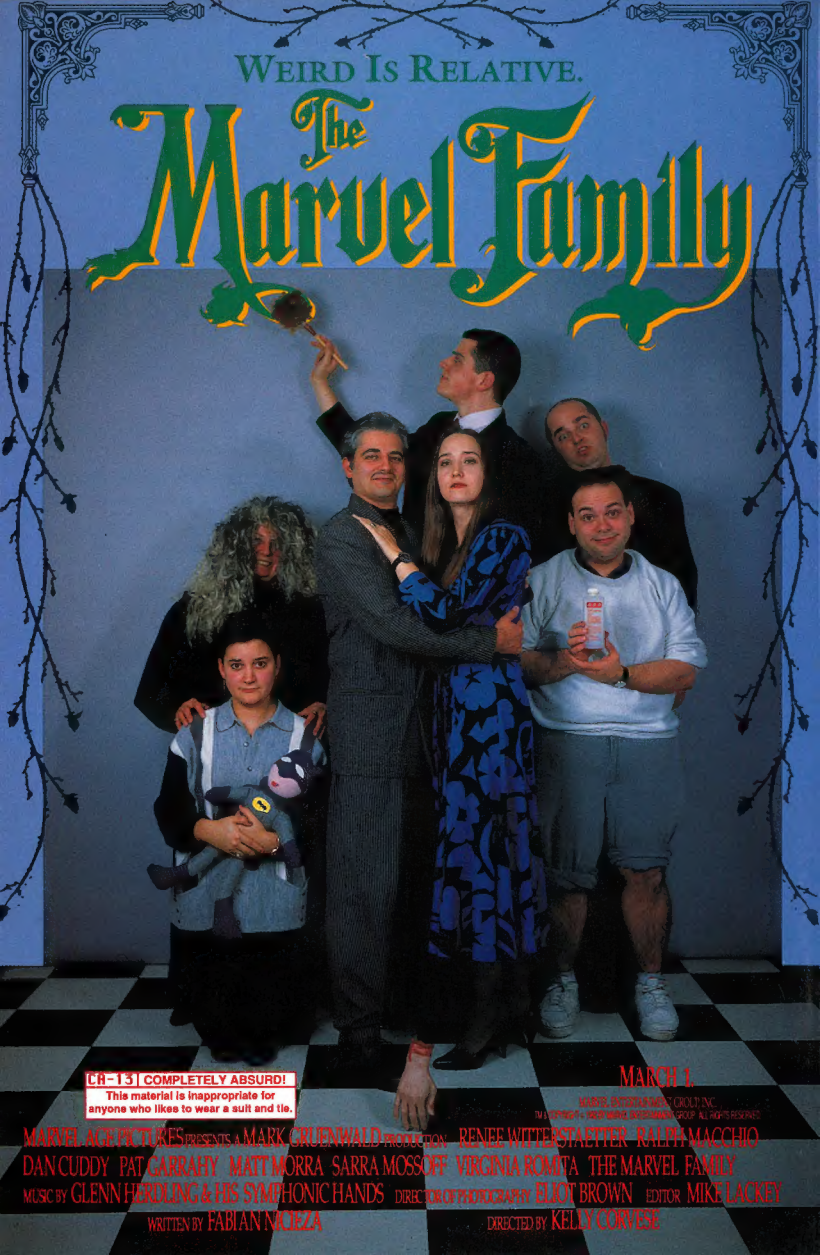
MARVEL COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here we are with another glorious MARVEL AGE Coming Attractions Checklist! Now, all of you Marveloids can read snippy quips about all of your favorite titles shipping in April, 1992! Waft on!

- ☐ ALPHA FLIGHT #109 $1.75
  Lobdell, Morgan
- ☐ ALPHA FLIGHT SPECIAL #1 $2.50
  Lobdell, Broderick, Patterson
  Guest-starring Wolverine!
- ☐ AVENGERS #348 $1.75
  Harras, Epting, Palmer
  New revelations about the Vision!
- ☐ AVENGERS WEST COAST #83 $1.25
  Thomas, Trimpe
- ☐ BARBIE #17 $1.25
  Robbins, Cool
  The gals compete with a gritty heavy metal band!
- ☐ BARBIE FASHION #18 $1.25
  Slate
  Skipper avoids the dentist!
- ☐ BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT COMIC BOOK #7 $1.25
  Dorkin, Severin
- ☐ CAGE #3 $1.25
  McLaurin, Turner, Ivy
  Features Cage as a kid! Torn diapers?
- ☐ CAPTAIN AMERICA #401 $2.25
  Gruenwald, Levins, Bulanadi
  Our hero, D-Man, returns!
- ☐ CAPTAIN PLANET #9 OF 12 $1.25
  Rimmer, Capaldi
- ☐ CONAN #257 $1.25
  Thomas, Docherty, Chan
  Featuring Queen Vammetar!
- ☐ CONAN SAGA #63 $2.25
  Thomas, Buscema, DeZuniga
- ☐ SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #198 $2.25
  Thomas, Buscema, Chan
  Beautiful magic-babes in this ish!
- ☐ DAREDEVIL #305 $1.25
  Chichester, Weeks, Williamson
  Grittier than a sandbox!
- ☐ DARKHAWK #16 $1.25
  Fingeroth, Manley, Villagran
- ☐ DEATHLOK #12 $1.75
  McDuffie, Cowan, Manley
  Guest-starring Nick Fury!
- ☐ DEATH'S HEAD II #4 OF 4 $1.75
  Abnett, Sharp, Lanning
  Grittier than lunch on the beach!
- ☐ DEFENDERS OF DYNATRON CITY #5 OF 6 $1.25
  Purcell, Cirocco, McKenna
- ☐ DOCTOR WHO #185 $4.50
  Grittier than the Sandman's shorts!
- ☐ DR. STRANGE #42 $1.75
  Thomas, Isherwood
  An INFINITY WAR crossover!
- ☐ EXCALIBUR #51 $2.75
  Davis, Farmer
  Excalibur's vs. giant dinosaurs!
- ☐ FANTASTIC FOUR #365 $1.25
  DeFalco, Ryan, Bulanadi
  Grittier than the Thing's dandruff!
- ☐ GHOST RIDER #256 $2.75
  Mackie, Wagner, Witherby
  Crosses over with X-MEN #9!
- ☐ G.I. JOE #125 $1.25
  Hama, Wildman, Emberlin
  Special diptych issue (?)
- ☐ GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #25 $1.75
  Valentino, Montano
  Features a laser-foil cover! Oooh! Aaah!
- ☐ INCREDIBLE HULK #394 $1.25
  David, Keown, Farmer
  Wreckin' the town with the power of a gritty bull!
- ☐ IRON MAN #281 $1.25
  Kaminski
  Kids! Sell Grit!
- ☐ JAMES BOND JUNIOR #6 $1.25
- ☐ KID 'N PLAY #5 $1.25
  Coye, Frazier, Boyd
  Kid's hair defies gravity in this ish!
- ☐ MARVEL AGE #113 $1.00
  Still holding out at a measly buck!
- ☐ MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #104 $1.50
- ☐ MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #105 $1.50
- ☐ MARVEL TALES #262 $1.25
- ☐ MARVEL UNIVERSE MASTER EDITION #19 $4.50
  Gruenwald, Pollard, Rubinstein
  Find out fun facts about your fave gritty heroes!
- ☐ MOON KNIGHT #39 $1.75
  Kavanagh, Kwapisz, Palmer
  Moon Knight gets grit in his costume!
- ☐ THE 'NAM #69 $1.75
  Dixon, Kobasic, Palmiotti
  Was gritty before it was chic!
- ☐ NAMOR #27 $1.25
  Byrne, Lee, Wiacek
- ☐ NEW WARRIORS #24 $1.25
  Nicieza, Bagley, Mahlsteadt
- ☐ NFL SUPERPRO #9 $1.25
  Dixon, DeCarlo
- ☐ NOMAD #2 $2.00
  Nicieza, Hawbaker, McKenna
  There's enough grit here to fill a cement truck!
- ☐ PIRATES OF DARK WATER #8 OF 9 $1.25
  Zimmerman, Zick, Garvey
- ☐ PUNISHER #64 $1.25
  Dixon, Smith, Rubinstein
  True Grit!
- ☐ PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #43 $1.75
  Dixon, Fox
  Isn't "gritty" a silly adjective?
- ☐ PUNISHER WAR ZONE #4 $1.75
  Dixon, Romita Jr., Janson
  Frank blows his cover!
- ☐ PUNISHER ANNUAL #5 $2.25
  Something this gritty only happens once a year!
- ☐ PUNISHER LAUNDRY SPECIAL $1.25
  M. Aginery, F. Ooldya
  Frank's laundry secrets! Get out blood stains & more!
- ☐ QUASAR #35 $1.25
  Gruenwald, Capullo, Candelario
  There's grit in my eye!
- ☐ SHE-HULK #40 $1.75
  Byrne
  A Shulkie Space Saga!
- ☐ SHIELD #36 $1.75
  Brown & Sharp, Wyman, Hudson
  Great inking on this book!
- ☐ SILVER SABLE #1 $1.50
  A whole series of gritty stories! Silver cover, too!
- ☐ SILVER SURFER #66 $1.25
  Marz, Lim, Christopher
  Surfer rejects the universe's most beautiful babe! Wotta dope!
- ☐ SLEEPWALKER #13 $1.25
  Budiansky, Quesada, Bair
  Gritty, gritty, gritty!
- ☐ SPIDER-MAN #23 $1.75
  Larsen
  Gritty gatefold cover!
- ☐ AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #363 $1.25
  Michelinie, Bagley, Emberlin
  Gritty battle with Venom & Carnage!
- ☐ SPECTACULAR SPIDERMAN #189 $2.95
  DeMatteis, Buscema
  Gritty 30th Anniversary ish!
- ☐ WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #89 $1.25
  Mackie, Saviuk, De LaRosa
- ☐ THE THING #3 OF 4 $1.25
  Gillis, Miller, McLeod
  The original gritty hero!
- ☐ THOR #448 $1.25
  DeFalco, Frenz, Milgrom
  The Yuppie Killer strikes in this ish! How bad can he be?
- ☐ TOXIC CRUSADERS #2 $1.25
  Gerber, Yaniger
  Night of the Living Dessert!
- ☐ WARHEADS #1 $1.75
  Vince, Erskine
- ☐ WARLOCK #2 OF 6 $2.50
  Starlin, Milgrom
  Gritty reprintings of the classic cosmic sagas!
- ☐ WARLOCK & THE INFINITY WATCH #5 $1.75
  Starlin, Medina
- ☐ WHAT IF? #38 $1.25
  Thomas, Lofficier, Pacella
- ☐ WOLVERINE #55 $1.75
  Hama, Silvestri, Green
  Featuring Donny & Mariko
- ☐ WONDER MAN #10 $1.25
  Jones, Johnson, Harps
  Special Politically Correct Issue!



- ☐ WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING #3 $1.25
  Lackey, Wilson, Hudson
  Take a trip on the Bruise Cruise!
- ☐ X-FACTOR #79 $1.25
  David, Stroman, Milgrom
- ☐ X-FORCE #11 $1.25
  Liefeld, Nicieza
  None grittier!
- ☐ X-MEN #9 $1.25
  Lee, Byrne, Williams
  Guest-starring Grit Rider, oops, that's Ghost-Rider!
- ☐ X-MEN CLASSIC #72 $1.75
  Not to be confused with Coke Classic!
- ☐ UNCANNY X-MEN #289 $1.25
  Byrne, Portacio, Kubert


WEIRD IS RELATIVE.
The Marvel Family
CR-13 COMPLETELY ABSURD!
This material is inappropriate for anyone who likes to wear a suit and tie.
MARCH 1.
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